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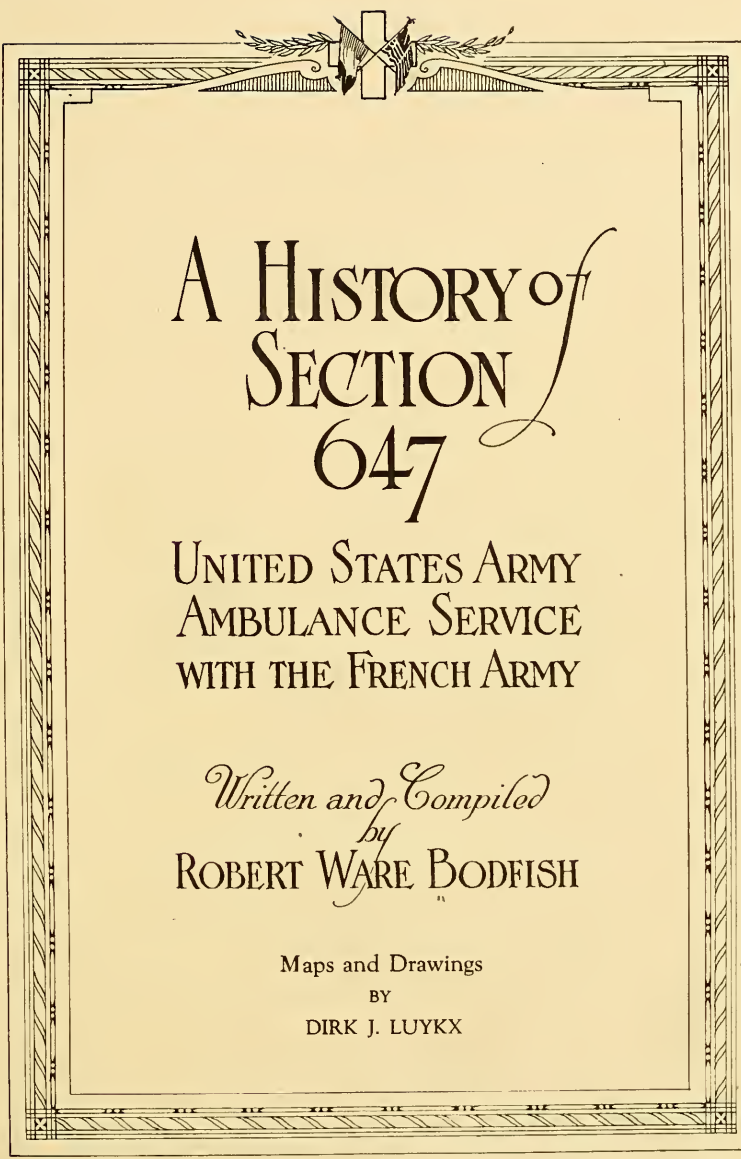
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PALMER, MASS.

Printed and Designed by
THE STOBBS PRESS
WORCESTER, MASS.

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DEC 17 1919



A HISTORY of
SECTION
647

UNITED STATES ARMY
AMBULANCE SERVICE
WITH THE FRENCH ARMY

Written and Compiled
by
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Maps and Drawings
BY
DIRK J. LUYKX

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Tod Ford Gillett





God Ford
Gillett

*A
companion in our
good times, and an ex-
ample in his sacrifice
of a devotion to duty
which we shall ever
remember with ad-
miration, this book
is affectionately
dedicated*





To Mr. and Mrs. Myron C. Gillett.

We, the members of Section Sanitaire Americaine 647, wish to express our heart-felt sympathy to you in the loss of your beloved son

Tod Ford Gillett.

No bounds can measure your loss of a son, and ours of a tried and true comrade.

Fearless and able, no danger was too great for Tod to brave in rescuing his fallen comrades. It was on a day when personal risk met him at every moment that he made the final sacrifice for his fellows.

There is no nobler death. This thought alone tempers our grief. We loved Tod the more as we grew to know him, and shall always remember him as America's best type of gentleman. We speak truly when we say that our loss is second only to yours.

Jack R. Lewis
 Deane M. Randolph
 Wallace M. Crandall
 Fred M. Conner
 Speed Simpson
 Dan M. J. Cornell
 Carl H. Smith
 Francis B. Brader
 Leo M. Bradford
 Allen Brown
 Grant R. Willard
 John C. Barry

Henry J. Signor
 Paul M. ...
 Carl A. ...
 Samuel W. ...
 Robert W. ...
 Maurice C. ...
 James ...
 Frank ...
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 James H. ...

Dick J. ...
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Ray M. ...



PREFACE



ELLOW MEMBERS OF 647:—

You commissioned me to write and publish a history of our section. I have done the best that I could for you. There are those among you who will not be entirely satisfied with my effort. It would indeed be surprising if most of your criticisms are not good ones. I have simply written as I thought the subject could be best presented in a fairly readable manner. I have been forced to leave out many little incidents which might have enlivened a part of the story. I felt that there was a danger that too many isolated anecdotes might prevent the working out of a smooth, connected history. I have tried to balance the different portions of our work so as to give each its right proportion of space. I have intended to tell the truth about our life. I believe that I have told nothing to embarrass any of you. We lived the life of natural men, did our work as we saw it, and ought not to be ashamed of our good times. If I have succeeded in giving you a true portrayal, you, alone, can judge.

Let me thank all of you for your co-operation. I, especially, wish to thank those who contributed little favors to assist me, as Luykx, Anderson, and Wilder. Everything helped out.

If it is the proper place, and I believe it is, permit me, in the name of the section, to thank Lieutenant Smith for the tact and loyalty which he showed in his duties as our commanding officer. It is rare, even in our service, that a body of men have a superior officer who is able to respond so closely to the requirements of a position as did our Lieutenant. His name will be always linked with the best days of Section 647.

It is in place also that I thank Sergeant Swain in the name of the section for the constant, untiring efforts which he used in our behalf. He did his work well. He more than did his work. He put himself out constantly for the men of the section. He was no Top Sergeant in the ordinary meaning of the word. He was always a friend and helper who was never satisfied until his section received the best that could be found for it.

I wish that I could go on down the list of the men who were in a position to work for the section as a whole. "Horn" Snader, Andy, and Risley are among those whom I should want to praise were I to thank men particularly for extra attention to the welfare of the section and the men. But I must not assume too great a right to praise. Each member has that as his own, undelegated prerogative.

To Colonel Percy L. Jones and his subordinate officers who helped to perfect the work of the service, Section 647 sends its greetings. We congratulate them on their work and trust that the United States Army Ambulance Service with the French Army will long live in memory as a tribute to their efficiency.

Lastly, a closing word to you in the name of the Section. We have created a means by which we may keep in touch with each other now that the war is over. Let us make an effort to remember our friendship together, and let us try to meet again at some future time. As a practical suggestion I may say that there ought to be a slight

surplus from the printing of this book. That can always be used for the printing of cards to inform members of a proposed reunion. I shall be more than glad to have such cards printed so that any man desiring to promote a reunion may know who will be able to attend.

We had a good section. We grow more and more proud of it each day as we remember our life and work together. It ought to remain a living thing, not just a dead memory. This history, I hope, will help. Each one of us, alone, can make such life a certainty.

ROBERT W. BODFISH.

Palmer, Massachusetts, July 14, 1919.

INTRODUCTION



It is perhaps necessary for the complete understanding of this History of Section 647 by readers not of the section that we insert a short foreword explaining the origin and nature of the service of which the section was a part.

The outbreak of the war in 1914 was followed rather closely by the efforts of Americans in and about Paris to help the French in whatever way seemed the most practical. Aid in the work of caring for the wounded appeared to be the most practical service. A partially finished school in Neuilly-sur-Seine, just outside the gates of Paris, was fitted up by an American Committee as a hospital, and hastily equipped ambulances were used to transport wounded about Paris and in the battle zone itself. This organization, thus begun, rapidly developed under the name of the American Ambulance and established a rear and front ambulance and hospital service. In 1916 the front work of the organization was separated from the hospital work and carried on independently under the name of the American Field Service. A. Piatt Andrew acted as the head of this service up to the advent of the American Army.

The work of the American Ambulance was paralleled during the early days very closely by Mr. H. H. Harjes and Mr. Richard Norton who operated two ambulance services under the British and American Red Cross respectively. In 1915 these were united under the American Red Cross with the official title, Motor Ambulance Sections of the American Red Cross. This service is familiarly known to us as the Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service.

All of these organizations secured their personnel through the enrollment of Americans already in France who desired to be of some immediate service, and through the enlistment of young men in America who were eager to contribute something towards assisting the heroic sufferers of Europe. Many of these men gave heavily to maintain the sections composing the different ambulance services. Other funds were raised by campaigns conducted throughout the United States. By both means and by the particular interest of a few wealthy Americans the services were able to work valiantly for the French Armies.

After the American declaration of war plans were formulated for the organization of an Army Ambulance Service to take the place of the volunteer services already at work. It is said that this program was initiated largely at the request of Marshal Joffre to the Surgeon-General of the United States Army. At all events, volunteers were sought for the launching of the United States Army Ambulance Service with the French Army, as the new organization came to be known. Colleges sent units and volunteers were trained for several months at Allentown, Pennsylvania, to take up the work. The first ten sections left for France in August, 1917.

Meanwhile the American Ambulance had been consolidated with the American Red Cross and then had been absorbed by the American Army. The American Field Service and the Norton-Harjes Service were also to be superseded by the Army Service as soon as it could be brought to France. Many of the volunteer drivers enlisted with the new service and several sections were left intact to continue their work. Where not enough men in a section enlisted to permit the section being left, the volunteers kept

up the work until an Allentown unit was ready to take their place. Then the men who had enlisted reported at the Service Headquarters for reassignment and were sent as casuals to be formed into sections at a later period. Our own section, 647, was made up in this manner.

The United States Army Ambulance Service with the French Army has very efficiently continued the splendid work of the volunteer service. It has had the command of larger financial resources than the other and the results obtained have been correspondingly greater. Most of the sections have been detailed for duty with French Divisions. A few have been assigned to work with American Divisions as an aid to their Sanitary Trains. In each case the sections have done the front evacuation of wounded. Competent critics, without reserve, have spoken very highly of their loyalty and efficiency. No small amount of this credit must be given to Colonel Percy L. Jones, the Chief of Service, who has labored zealously to build up the organization of the sections and automobile parks so as to contribute best in unified service. With his must be grouped the names of his immediate subordinates, as well as those of the Lieutenants who have commanded the various sections.

Sections in this service, apparently, have been exceptions among army units in that so great a degree of freedom has been granted them. They have not abused that privilege, but have used it, rather, to perfect the task in hand. Our section, every section in the Service, has no reason to be other than tremendously proud of its share in the war. The personnel of the Service was largely made up of college men. Every man sought to contribute individually to the efficiency of the sections. Each section was left sufficiently independent so that it could adjust its methods to meet the local situation. Each section seemed to be noticeably successful.

Frankly speaking, it would be difficult to find any man who is not satisfied with his section and with the Service of which it was a part. Their work has been worthwhile. Many citations and decorations from French and American Armies tell the opinion of others. We, as members, are proud of our comrades, the high grade of men who worked with us. We are proud of the freedom allowed us and glad for the acquaintance with France which that permitted. We know that that acquaintance has left us a distinct task and we welcome such an opportunity to interpret our French cousin in his proper light of hero, soldier, and friend.

CHAPTER I

SANDRICOURT



E came to Sandricourt expecting to become members of a new section and be sent to the front immediately. We remained at Sandicourt for four months.

The men who later became a part of section 647 were from various sections of the Norton-Harjes Volunteer Ambulance Service and from the American Ambulance Service. Most of the men had come in directly from the front and, with others who had not yet been to the front, were eager to join the proposed section. These men responded loyally when the United States recruiting officer had urged them to enlist in the United States Army Ambulance Service. Surely their experience warranted their speedy assignment to duty. Rumor had it that the Allentown units were to take over new fields of work. The old volunteers would certainly have a place.

The new section was formed in a month. It left for the front in four months. It reached the front in April. This was October.

If we could have waited patiently at Sandricourt until we were sent out we might look back at it with a better feeling. For Sandricourt was not such a poor place. We associate the name with our camp. There was a town of Sandricourt nearby but we paid little attention to it.

Our Sandricourt which we built and kept in running order, much of the time only for ourselves, consisted of a group of farm buildings about an inside court, an abundance of land outside, later three barracks and a Y. M. C. A. tent, 'Genie's and Suzanne's. These latter were cafes situated about a mile and a half from the camp in the little town of Courcelles. They were the rendezvous of the members on those later winter evenings when the section spirit was at its lowest ebb.

But we didn't branch out into the barracks and Suzanne's at first. The early days were spent under strict military discipline. Allentown sections came, remained a few days, and went out, with clocklike regularity. We performed our duties faithfully; stood guard, seeing no prowlers night after night; stood at retreat, fearful lest some command should leave us stranded; built barracks which we hoped never to live in; and went to bed at six P. M. because it was cold and we had nothing better to do.

So we existed, feeling more and more useless every day. A month brought a little change. Lieut. Harry E. Anderson, who had been the chief of old section 21, came from Paris to organize a new section from the old volunteer casuals. Section Sanitaire 647 came into existence officially on November 12, and most of the members were added within a week. We were living now in one of the barracks which we had put up. Section 9 kept open house next to us. On the other side was an empty barrack used occasionally by transients. The Y. M. C. A. tent completed the row of official dwellings. We are not at all partial to the Y. M. C. A., less now than then, yet we found the tables for writing and the occasional entertainments worth enjoying.



Sandricourt

We became the masters of the camp. We were, in fact, almost the only members. The Allentown sections came through rarely and we settled down for the winter, discontented but helpless, and so inclined to make the most of our lot. We became acquainted with each other, found that the other man was a pretty good sort and of a congenial type. Most of



The Barracks

the section were college men, or men of similar training, and, while there were wide differences of temperament, each man had that understanding of his fellow and of the group which has been the secret of 647. The men got along with each other. Occasional differences left no rancour. Every man meant to be a good fellow. Every man saw far enough beyond his own horizon to be worth cultivating. The winter at Sandricourt really made the section the body it now is. We became brothers before the trials of the front came to test all bands of fellowship.



Inside the Court Yard

The camp officials, led by Major Hall, were fine men and we recall with pleasure our relations with them, particularly with Major Chaudron and Major Whitney. The latter has never forgotten us and has always remained our true friend.

The work at Sandricourt was not so severe that there was no time for recreation. We refused to let even our "details" lapse into the realm of just work. There was humor to most everything. For a while at least we declined



The French Cook

to permit K. P. itself to get on our nerves. Several attempts to drive Ford cars brought grief. Andy, Jess, and Woody found that they could start the thing but that outside assistance was necessary to stop it. A stone wall, a pool, and a post bore the brunt of the consequences. Dr. DuPurtis, the staid Y. M. C. A. secretary wasn't immune and lost his temper to the extent of uttering: "They're contrary things, aren't they?" when he left the "straight and narrow path" while trying to get through the main gate.



Barbed wire defenses

Reserve trenches at Sandricourt

A covered trench at Sandricourt

Retreat brought our motley numbers out in most unmilitary fashion, clad in our old volunteer uniforms, to salute the colors of the camp. Then came supper, then recourse to the barrack where we discussed quite intelligently questions of the day, or lined up the "hounds" for games of "Red Dog" or poker. "Red Dog" brought the most confirmed anti-gambler as an audience on pay day nights when hands worth watching were staked. Taps sent most of us between the blankets, unless we were on guard when we very conscientiously kept "the home fires burning" in the garage and barracks. If

we did "hit" our bunks we listened to the friendly greetings hurled from cot to cot in the neighboring barrack or heard the wit of the day rehashed with a little original "stuff" in our own.



The first Bar-le-Duc trip

when he reached the barrack. Some were a bit loquacious but inspired good temper is easily forgiven.

The longer evenings also brought plans for other entertainment. Dr. DuPurtis used the Y. M. C. A. to obtain entertainers from without the camp and furnished a rather good program on each attempt. Still our real fun in this line came from the boxing contests staged in the Y. M. tent. There was a rather mysterious abandoning of these contests but they were "topnotchers" while they lasted. It is a matter of record that one Micky Kernan substituted at the last moment for Eddie Durkin against a young Frenchman named Hartwell. What Micky expected may only be surmised from his exclamation: "You told me he was sick" after the fight. Micky stood up to his medicine like an Irishman, however, and asked his opponent if he wanted to "mix it up" just before his final knockdown. But the best contest of all was the "grudge" bout between Sergeant Major Gordon and Sergeant First Class Arner. We say "grudge" bout because only that could have kept Sergeant Gordon plunging into Sergeant Arner's right jab as he did. There were other bouts but these two stand out particularly.

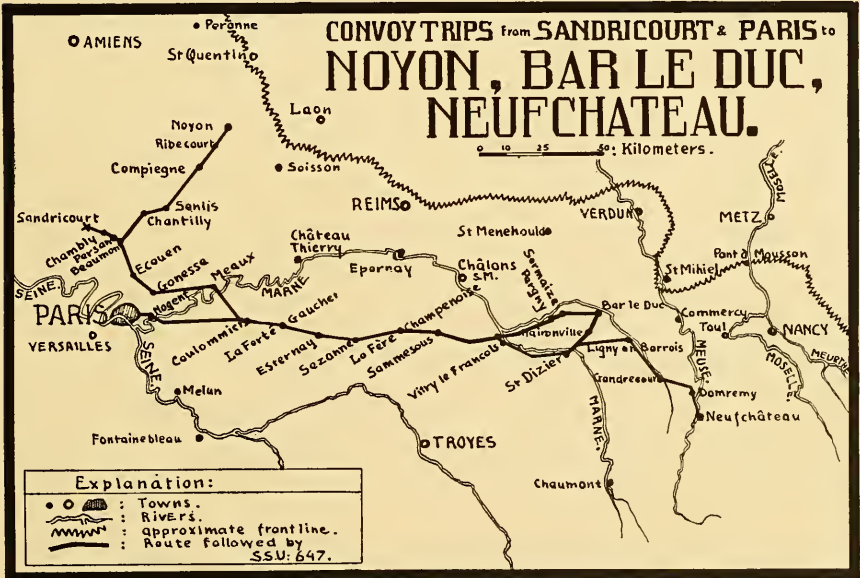
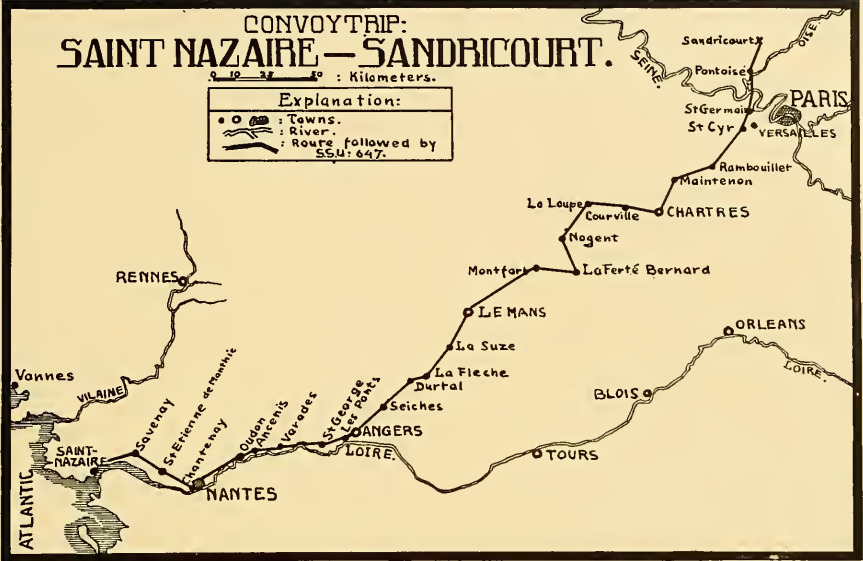
Thanksgiving gave us a general hilarity fest. There was a Y. M. entertainment but we remember primarily our round of "joy" in the barrack, and the miraculous painting of a cabin in the empty barrack which Andy couldn't explain the next day.

So time slipped away and we had our first convoy as a section. We were ordered to drive Fords from Sandricourt to supply a section beyond Noyon. It was about the first attempt at Ford driving by some of the boys. We



A Gift from Home

started with a delay over one car and then reached "top form" which we held until the bulk of the convoy had passed through Persan-Beaumont. Here "Horn" Snader broke up a funeral procession by most inconsiderately hitting the hearse. The corpse failed to respond but the funeral director did in a tirade which left "Horn" speechless. "Horn" is a good listener in several languages. The Lieutenant broke up the "conversation" by hustling the cars along in his usual fashion. We did good work on the trip, reaching Noyon before dark, despite our inexperience and flat tires. The sight of the bare towns





Trying to keep warm

mediately for the nearest cafe and breakfast. The poor woman in charge worried a bit over her pay but all we lost was Mark Kerr, who, of course, rejoined us. Whatever St. Nazaire is in summer, it is cold to the freezing point in winter. We spent the day in getting the cars into running condition. We drove them up to the barracks which had been allotted us for the night, barracks set up on a plain swept by winds that may easily have originated in Alaska. A guard was posted that night and we patriotically froze in our country's service. The next morning we were hit by a snow storm which left the roads slippery and dangerous for fast travel. However we reached Angers. The next day we made a long run up to 10 p. m., when we arrived at Chartres where we proceeded to get split up while hunting for our billet in the town. Harris managed to bend an axle by skidding clear around a tree that day, but with no serious consequences. We reached our destination at five o'clock on the afternoon of the 20th, cold but in good spirits, especially as a pile of Christmas mail was waiting.

Our real Christmas celebration was a spontaneous affair on Christmas Eve. We planned eggnog for Christmas morning but were a little

along the route served to bring back the feeling of homesickness for the front. We wanted to do something real again. But we could only take our spite out in Paris that night and return dutifully to Sandricourt the next day.

A word at this point about the section organization may be well. Lieutenant Anderson, on assuming command, named Philip Klein as top sergeant, Jack B. Kendrick as second sergeant, Robert W. Byerly as third sergeant, and John B. Carey as corporal. All but Sergeant Kendrick were from his old section, 21. He was from section 11. Sergeant Klein left the section early to attend an officers' school at Meaux. Sergeant Kendrick acted as top sergeant during most of the period at Sandricourt. Possessed of a wonderful ability to make friends and handle the section, he showed none of the proverbial traits of the top sergeant but won a place in the section's esteem and confidence which he has never lost.

The section remained only a week in camp when it was ordered to drive cars from the seaport at St. Nazaire to Sandricourt. We left for Paris on December 15th. Here we struck some delays and spent the night and the next day in making the most of the city. The night train brought us into St. Nazaire and we headed im-



Our first home at Sandricourt

previous with it. There was plenty of Christmas joy in the barrack that night. There are no casualties on record although a little first aid was found necessary to lead a few erring youths to their downy couches. One man traveled in state on a table, in lieu of a better conveyance. Others found arm assistance alone necessary. Christmas Day saw us a bit laxy and indisposed. We brightened up on eggnog in the middle of the morning, however, and had keen appetites for a good dinner at noon. In the afternoon we had an impromptu soccer game which we topped off with a Y. M. C. A. entertainment and more eggnog in the evening.

Our third and easily our best convoy came immediately after Christmas. On the afternoon of December 26th we left for Paris where we were ordered to get some old Field Service Fords and drive them to Bar-le-Duc. We slept, most of us, in the dry but cold barrack at 21 rue Raynouard. The cars did not respond to our efforts very well, several "freezing" on us, so that we fell fifty kilometres behind our schedule. More sleet at night left the roads very icy and only luck and handy cafes kept us from a general physical and moral breakup. As it was, Fraser miraculously escaped injury when his car skidded off the road and turned over. We stopped at La Ferte Gaucher, about twenty kilometres from Bar-le-Duc. Here we slept in a loft, but had the best supper the town afforded. After leaving our cars at the automobile park in Bar-le-Duc we plowed, pushed, and dug the truck carrying us through the snow on the hilly road leading to town from the park. The truck was a big French camion and the day one of the coldest of a cold winter. Though we disputed the road with another French truck we managed to reach the station before train time, only to find the train to be several hours late. So we headed for a neighboring British canteen and made for the lunch counter. A kind English lady soon picked us out of the crowd of French, asked us if we were British, if we had any "clackers," and what we wanted. Her "Don't call me Mother," left us a bit at sea but we did justice to the "eggs with." With little adventure further, at least for us, we reached Paris, spent the night there in true 647 fashion, and arrived at Sandricourt at 8.30, Sunday night, the 30th.

The next day we spent in a little recuperation and preparation because we were planning a good old-fashioned celebration for New Year's Eve. The Y. M. C. A. broke into our party plans, however, by sending a hurry call for everyone to head for the Y. M. tent as entertainers had turned up unexpectedly from Paris. Most of us marched to the tent, expecting one of the usual "affairs." What we got brought us to our feet with a "yell." M'lle Gondret of the Paris Opera House struck just the right response in the boys and everyone went completely off his balance, at her quaint, catchy songs, her rare voice, and winning manner. We were so keyed up after the entertainers had gone that no one can blame our seeing the New Year in with songs and general hilarity. It was to be a great year if our way of introducing it signified anything.

The usual reaction came after our recreation and we were set at work in earnest, preparing for the arrival of 300 Allentown men. We dug ditches, built walks, and "juggled" beds for the new men in more rain and mud than Sandricourt had seen in weeks. The trips for cinders to Bornel had "refreshing" features but it was generally pretty difficult to get out of the lethargy of the past month. However we didn't "pass out" but found time to stage as unusual a contest as the army has seen.

Not the least of our "details" at Sandricourt was that of Kitchen Police. While K. P. was disagreeable work for most of us, some found it worthwhile. One "Breadbroken," a casual living in our barrack, and one "Serg" of our own number were said to have such appetites that their presence on K. P. became a menace to the camp. The fame of these men spread until a dispute arose as to the relative merits of the two. "Serg" seldom missed the head of the mess line, and "Breadbroken" frequented the kitchen at all hours. The barrack split into rival camps, each champion had a manager selected for him, and the bets came so thick and fast that the candidates for the office of camp Vitellius had no doubts regarding the seriousness of the contest. The men went

into training. A liquid diet, long country runs, and empty stomachs kept the proper condition. The contest was listed for a Friday night and even the potatoes and hard tack were provided. But the camp mess officer necessarily interfered as he failed to see why two "athletes" should gorge themselves with food when the civilians of the region had scarcely the necessities of life. While we adjourned the tournament quickly and got "all set" for a second trip to Bar-le-Duc, the disappointed rivals forgot all enmity and joined hands over a nineteen egg omelette at Suzanne's.

On Saturday, January 12th, the section finished its series of Sandricourt convoys. We put in two days of hard riding, enjoying forty-eight hours of very fine weather. At Bar-le-Duc we slept in a French barrack and took our cars to the park early the next morning. The Lieutenant had us scheduled to return by train through Paris to Sandricourt that night. We thought otherwise. So it proved to be marvelously difficult to start the big truck which was to carry us to town, and we only reached the station after train time. But the train was late, and we arrived in Paris in easy time to connect with the Bornel "express". The Lieutenant, himself, failed to make connections for some reason, and so did not witness the fine billard tournament which was played in a cafe while we were waiting for "Cookie" and his truck to enable us to reach camp. We were in no mood to "hike" the distance and "Pinkie" was very sick from overwork on the trip. He recovered in the bracing air on the way home.

Our four convoys had been replete with hard driving and annoyances yet we enjoyed them. We saw a great deal of France which we might have missed otherwise, and found even the hardships worthwhile. We slept anywhere in towns we happened to be in at the end of the day, usually in some stable loft or in a temporarily abandoned building. Guard on the cold, frosty nights wasn't a pleasure, nor the starting of cars in the early morning. Yet we survived and look back now to name these convoys the biggest feature in our Sandricourt existence.

Thus our real life as a section at Sandricourt ended. New sections came in and we retired on well-won laurels and watched the others drill and work. Rumors grew increasingly persistent that we were to leave for the front. The camp was listed as due to move, and we to go before that date. On January 19th the exodus began and part of the section went to Fort de Vanves, on the outskirts of Paris, to commence assembling cars for the section's use. On January 30th more men followed. The spirit was gone from the men who were left and the days were counted till the time we were all to go. Our interest in the camp had disappeared and it took "Lance Corporal" Snader's most invigorating "Suzanne Glide" in the early mornings to get up pep sufficient to keep us on the move for the rest of the day. On February 5th, almost exactly four months since the first of us reached Sandricourt, the last of us left. The section was enlarged by the addition of seven men on the day we left. These men have since become as much a part of ourselves as the original number who "wintered" the war in Sandricourt. We hated the name Sandricourt when we left and saw no future that could be as repugnant. Yet now, in retrospect, we see the old base camp in a little clearer light, and realize that the bands forged there might never have been discovered had we spent our first days as a section in another place.

CHAPTER II

NEUFCHATEAU



It was a light-hearted section that reunited at Fort de Vanves. The men who had left Sandricourt earlier had practically completed the assembling of our Fords. The work had been done in snappy style and but a few days would be required to finish everything. The time at the Fort had been well spent; on the task in hand during the day, in giving vent to the animal spirit long pent up at Sandricourt in the evening. The boys at different times had been able to spend evenings in Paris. When unable to go there they had had nearly as good a time in cafes near camp. It became the custom

for the men to have their supper in these cafes, two particularly supplying our trade. The men became acquainted and most welcome here. The time was spent in playing cards, in music, and in a general relaxation. On one evening they had watched the biggest air raid of the year on Paris. Although the Fort was beyond the danger zone, the noise of the bombing could be distinctly heard. The cars, even to motors and seat cushions in some cases, were painted, and we were "set".

Time slipped by and orders came to move on February 8th. The destination was to be Neufchateau where we were to be attached to the American Army. This announcement brought a round of groans when it reached the garage. Yet we were full of hope. We wanted to be with the French immediately and enjoy the accompanying independence. Yet we expected to reach them eventually and so could endure the American discipline for a while. Major Andrew inspected us and we made ready for an early start. It was the beginning of a new life. We were unable to see ahead, so no dark spots clouded the horizon.

We were now accustomed to convoys and had no accidents or unwelcome features during the move. The first night we spent at Fere en Champenoise, the second at Ligny en Barrois. On the third morning we climbed the long hill road that makes a half circle around the valley at Neufchateau. It was a beautiful day—cold but clear. Here on the edge of the town we waited while the Lieutenant secured more definite orders as to our disposal. We ate our army rations in the wind, looking at a picture that was to become very familiar to us before the front was finally reached. The valley stretched far back until it went out of sight behind the hills which formed the background for quaint Domremy, the little village whose name is coupled with that other struggle of France for life and liberty.



Leaving Fort de Vanves



Lieutenant Anderson and our cars at Neufchateau

Neufchateau itself is a modest little town, of narrow streets and the setting which suggests the 19th as much as the 20th century. The business section is quite compact, and is the center from which roads radiate to Bazoilles, Gondrecourt, and Rimau-court. The base hospital to which we were assigned was situated at easy walking distance from the center of the town. Most of its buildings had been erected by the Germans during their occupation of France after the Franco-Prussian War. It had been necessary to add only a few barracks for use as kitchens and a messhall. Several artillery companies lived at one end of the camp while some French soldiers and a French hospital were also on the grounds. We saw little of either of these—the hospital when a French band played to the sick and wounded—the artillerymen when we had to pass their guards on the later evenings as we returned from town.

The quarters given us consisted of a room on the second floor of one of the buildings. Next door to us, with the only entrance through our quarters, the members of Base Hospital 66 lived. We became well acquainted with some of these men. They were not exactly of our own type, yet they were a good sort and we got along peaceably together. Our room suffered from lack of light but was otherwise comfortable, principally because we made it so.

This was Neufchateau. We drove our cars into the yard, lined them up in approved fashion, headed for the barrack with our luggage, and so began another period of waiting. Here restlessness, misunderstanding, and internal strife were to bring the section nearer to the loss of many of its members and of the bands of friendship begun at Sandricourt than at any other time in its history.

Our work at the hospital consisted in evacuating cases from neighboring towns to the base hospital and in carrying cases to the larger hospital at Bazoilles. The entire twenty cars also were called upon very often to transport sick and wounded to American hospital trains from the Bazoilles hospital. The trips from calls were always welcome as there was scarcely any other way to break the monotony of a dull life. There is little to record about these trips. The run to Bazoilles was a short one and we did our work with despatch and care. Since, the hospital has become greatly enlarged. Even in that day we could see the plans for the largest military hos-



Burt on his trip for milk



In Convoy

pital in France gradually materializing as we drove down upon the little town from the Neufchateau road. Usually cars were sent singly on the calls in the direction of Rimau-court. Frequently a car went to Vittel, a watering place not far away. Here officers' dances were the common thing and we furnished taxicabs for them until officially forbidden. Cars at Gondrecourt were required but seldom. Later, trips became more frequent. It was a pretty ride and no difficulty was ever found in securing volunteers for the trips. So much for our official work. I have written little because there was little to write of.

Our other type of work was the usual curse of the soldier. When we first arrived the Lieutenant was asked to supply a certain number of men for the kitchen. He assigned our two cooks and generously added the new men as permanent kitchen police. Later this order was rescinded and we each took our turn. We and the German prisoners very creditably fed the camp.

Thus the routine became established. Calls came and were answered; potatoes were peeled and cooked, the camp was cursed and endured.

But any routine brings the unusual, and we soon began to create novelties lest we go mad over the disappointment and inaction of our surroundings. An average soldier, newly arrived at a billet, locates the nearest cafe as soon as possible. Once found, this cafe becomes his club house. Here he forgets the world and the day's misfortune. Every soldier craves such a place; most find it.



A few of the boys at Neufchateau

The "Cinq Ponts" claimed the members of the section more often than the others. From this and other smaller cafes the nightly pilgrims straggled back to camp, sometimes a little after hours when difficulties of entrance had to be met with. Once two members walked by the gate, gesticulating and talking French so well in the darkness as to deceive the American guard. How some other entrances were effected is not recorded. That they were must suffice us.

The barrack, day and night, except when there were group convoys, was apt to be the scene of a "Red Dog" or poker game. Hour after hour was eased away in this manner. A section library of standard authors was secured and temporarily the men began to read worthwhile books. But the old inertia was too great and the reading of heavier fiction soon lapsed. The old routine slipped into place again. Several devotees of chess and checkers appeared but gained no popular support.

February became March and the poison began to sap our resistance. Friction was soon the expected occurrence. The apparently well oiled machine of Sandricourt threatened to "freeze" on the job. It was not overwork but inability to do service that brought the dry rot. The letters which the men sent home during this period are the truest indications that all wasn't running smoothly. The homefolks began to appeal for "more about your everyday life". To tell the truth shamed the men. Besides they dared not write freely as an uncertain, undefined censorship left them helpless. Finally most did not write at all. Five of the men attempted to transfer officially. Almost the entire section contemplated a change. It was only the comradeship of each other that held the section unbroken. Looking back, the men are glad that no transfer was effected. But then there were too many stern realities of the future to face to make continuation in the section altogether pleasant.

Yet we must not permit too despairing a picture. The promise of warmer weather brought outdoor activities to kill the indoor idleness.

Burt, who had assumed direction of the carrying of milk to the hospital from Rouvre la Chetive, became overwhelmed with appeals for company on the day that he told of the delicious breakfasts and invigorating wine which the French family, supplying the milk, were giving him. A considerable number of the members visited the farmhouse and found a very pleasant family. One boy was a prisoner in Germany, the other worked at home. The wife was full of energy and the real head of the household. She was very kind to the men who visited there and we shall never forget our impression of the simple French farmhouse where we found such real friendship.

Our section has always sought acquaintance with French civilians and has striven to understand the French people. We had admired the French soldiers in the volunteer days when we saw them at their best. Now, at Neufchateau, we were particularly disgusted when inexperienced Americans, even soldiers of a few days or weeks front service, lauded America and what she would do to end a war apparently already misconducted too long by France. We have served at the front with Americans since that day. We have found new viewpoints, real appreciation of this people who saved a world in which we were given the privilege to fight for our own liberties. But there at Neufchateau we saw only one type, and the vaunted superiority of these inexperienced, conceited men, invincible in their wisdom, was gall to us. We were eager to get out with these same French whom our countrymen had not yet learned to know.

These trips for milk were really the cause of another episode in our life. Through invitation, a group of the section members with several officers formed a party to hunt wild boors on the hills behind this farmhouse. A dinner was served in true overwhelming French style and a boistrous hunt was shared with the neighbors of the village. We, who didn't attend, received all the details at night when the hilarious participants returned. Two names of "gargoyle" survive, given by two usually sober members to each other.

Perhaps as a sequel to this trip a bottle of old "Nick" found its way into the garage. We weren't all aware of its arrival and so were a bit put out when we ventured into the workshop of our mechanics and found a three ring circus in progress. One mechanic was in the cage. The other had nailed him into the box and was pouring water on him with great delight. Just the point of the situation wasn't clear. Even the mechanics weren't sure the next day.

Such events were not the rule. If there seem to be many tales of exceptional hilarity in this history one must remember that it is the exceptional, not the commonplace, which furnishes interest.

Early March was fortunately accompanied by warm weather. Baseball facilities opened a way to endure with a little more pleasure the remaining days at Neufchateau. We were hopeful now that spring would send us to the front. The "feeds" in the barrack at night grew less frequent, and early after supper poker games became the exception when longer afternoons permitted our playing baseball on a field not far from camp. The Base Hospital members also formed a team and we played them several times. The most memorable game was on St. Patrick's Day when the elite of the hospital watched us run away with their idols by a score of 28 to 16. We have not won many of our starts in baseball since, being rather more proud of our exploits at soccer. Yet we still think we can boast a little justifiably of that first game.

The beauty of the country about Neufchateau has been spoken of. The men took several hikes into the surrounding towns to spots of interest. One, particularly attractive, was a chateau sitting high above the surrounding country behind the town. The other spot of special interest was the birthplace of Joan of Arc. Domremy is eleven kilometres from Neufchateau, a good walk for men who drive cars and do not walk for a living. It was worth the exercise, however, and most of the members made the trip, paying tribute at the birthplace and basilique to the unconquerable spirit of France which at this time was so severely tested.

For it was at this period that the great German drive at Noyon was beginning. We knew Noyon and yearned to get there and help. But as the military apparently knew no place there for us we stayed on at a base hospital.

Still a rift was appearing in our cloud and the prospect of real action became a certainty. Gas masks were issued to us and a gas sergeant gave us a trial in a gas chamber. We felt the move to the front pretty close. Yet we could not believe our good fortune imminent. Something would happen. A call for the evacuation of Base 66 and of Bazoilles to a hospital train almost convinced us that we were to remain forever. But at last definite orders came. We packed our belongings and pulled out.

Our departure for Vignot on April 15 was, as that from Sandricourt, made under a ray of hope. This time we reached what we had longed for for over six months, and were plunged into as hot action as we have ever wished to see. There is no good seen in Neufchateau in retrospect as in Sandricourt. It was the worst period of discouragement that the section has ever faced. We bade it farewell and rode forward to the dangers but greater joys of real service.

CHAPTER III

THE TOUL SECTOR



It is quite necessary to digress from our narrative for the moment and note the principal features of the sector to which we were assigned.

It will be remembered that when the German left wing, at the battle of the Marne, sought to take the city of Nancy, they were repulsed by the French under General Castelnau. The country between Verdun and Nancy is of a nature easy to defend. There is an absence of any continued break in the low ridges which easily command such small valleys as there are. From St. Mihiel to Pont à Mousson a series of low hills, dominated by Mont Sec, gave the Germans a position easy to hold, while similar ridges and hills which formed the Toul defences promised little success for them should they attempt an advance. Neither side could gain without calling upon a large force. That neither could spare. The French Colonials attempted a direct assault on Mont Sec in the spring of 1915, but were unable to keep the foothold which they gained after tremendous losses. So each side gave up the idea of an advance and the St. Mihiel salient became a fixture on the battle map.

The sector was one to which divisions were sent for a rest from the severer fighting of the north. It was here that American divisions were introduced to trench warfare; here also that, in time, Germans broke the rule of the quiet sector, tested the Americans' mettle, and met the rebuff which presaged the ultimate encircling of Mont Sec and the destruction of the salient.

We are particularly interested for the moment in that portion of the front between St. Mihiel and Pont à Mousson which formed the panorama visible from the hills behind the little town of Lagny. It was the center of the line and the most active. A fairly level valley stretched for a little over eight miles to the low ridge on whose top lay the highway which turned at Pont à Mousson almost directly north towards Metz. This road sloped into the valley beyond Rambaucourt until at Bouconville it divided, one part, then impassable, leading for St. Mihiel, while the other passed through Broussey and topped the ridge at Gironville where it descended again into another valley enclosing Vignot and Commercy.

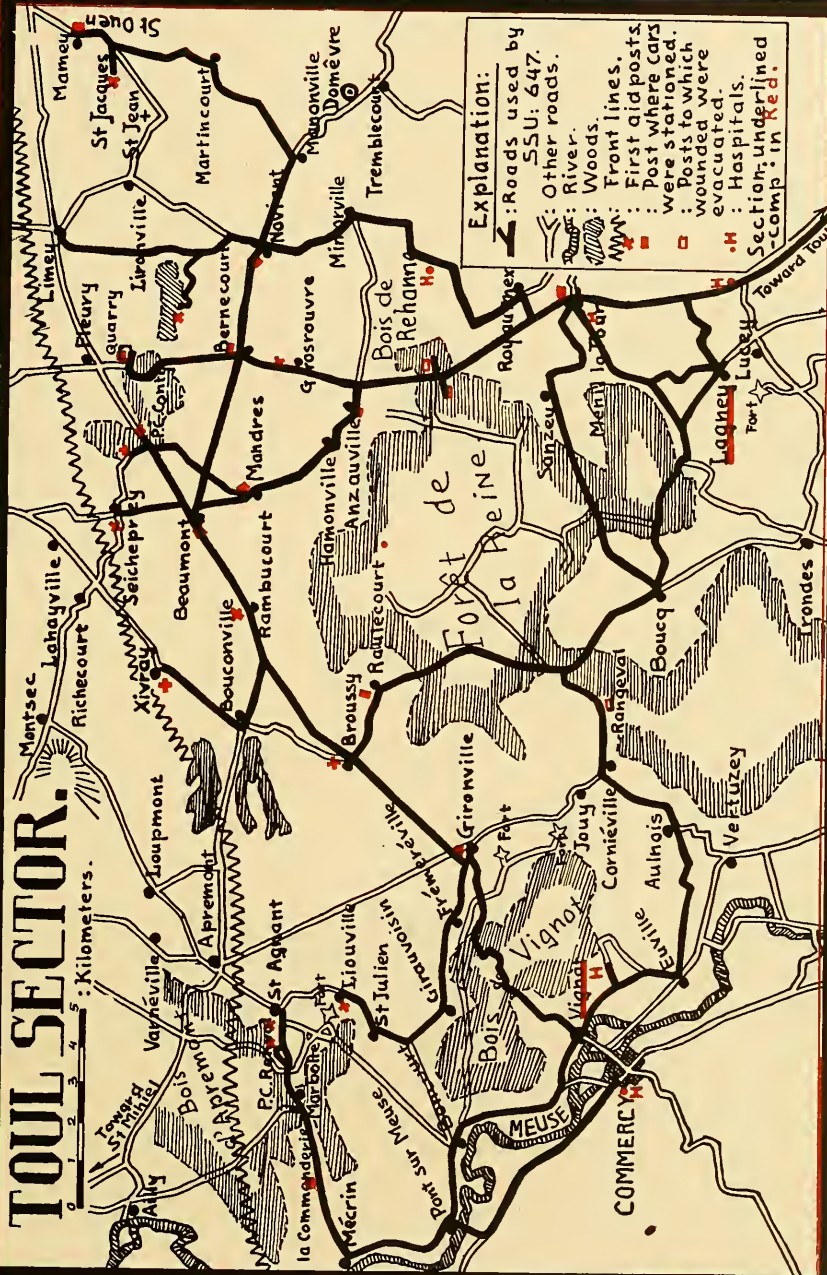
American batteries about St. Julien and Liouville exchanged greetings with the Germans on the ridge opposite. There were only small raids on the trenches beyond here however as the silent guns at Fort Gironville and a marsh between Broussey and the Ger-



The loft at Vignot

TOUL SECTOR.

0 1 2 3 4 5 : Kilometers.



Explanation:

- : Roads used by SSU: 647.
- : Other roads.
- : River.
- : Woods.
- : Front lines.
- : First aid posts.
- : Post where cars were stationed.
- : Posts to which wounded were evacuated.
- : Hospitals.
- : Section; underlined -comp. in Red.



Beaumont

mans in the valley prevented serious fighting. It was rather nearer the center that sharp engagements occurred. As has been said a low ridge, crowned by Beaumont and Rambaucourt, jutted out into this valley at the upper end, only two miles from the foot of Mont Sec itself. The battered villages of Xivray and Seichprey, held by the Americans as practically their front line, lay on the German side of the ridge. On the American side an observer could see the towns of Bernecourt, Noviant, and Minorville on the right, and Mandres and Ansauville just behind and below Beaumont. Menil la Tour and its little offshoot, Royaumeix, were in the foreground. Civilians lived in small numbers in a few of these villages but those literally under the shadow of Mont Sec were quite deserted. Enemy raids brought shells into these spots from the German stronghold which commanded a clear view of the entire valley and all movements that took place within. Yes, it was a quiet sector but you were always at the mercy of the enemy. Also it was a sector that meant possible disaster on every road when a raid was staged.

The run from Neuf-chateau was but a short one and early afternoon saw the cars on one of the back roads of Vignot. Here we received an emergency call to send ten cars to Menil la Tour where they were to be put into active service immediately. They left at once under the charge of Ser-



Rambaucourt



Beginning a trip at the Commandery

geant Kendrick. The other cars were lined up on one side of the main street of the town, and just across from our billet, the loft of one of the houses. Our quarters were very dark, hay was still piled high on most of the floor, and room for beds or stretchers was alone possible. Our kitchen trailer was installed in a combination shed and alleyway a few doors down the street. Such a position made a guard necessary. Many a letter was written and book read on this job, for the presence of a watchman was alone required.

The first night at Vignot was clear and the distant rumbling of guns introduced us to the front in a fitting manner. A raid at Apremont, the night previous, had given the 26th Division, to which we were now attached, its first taste of meeting the Boches. On this night rumor insisted on another attempt, but none materialized.

On Tuesday morning five other cars were sent on post. Three cars reported to a French medical station at a place called Commandery. A very solid dugout had been built in a side hill near what was said to have been a Post of Commandery for an old order of French Knights. Calls took the cars to St. Agnant. They came infrequently as there was little fighting in this vicinity. This and the welcome comradeship of the French made a rest post for the section. Only the falling eclat from the anti-aircraft guns and possibly an occasional shell, dropped harmlessly beyond us, disturbed the boys as they read, cooked their own meals with the French, walked about the hillside, or rode the donkeys of the neighboring farm. No one will forget that night when some of the Colonials, stationed nearby, sang



With our French friends at the Commandery



Swimming in the Meuse at Vignot

and danced in their native fashion, or when a broncardier, once a star with the Paris Opera House, gave us a variety of French war songs.

Two cars went to Gironville, that town under the guns of Fort Gironville, which lay unharmed by German artillery. From here cars followed the lower slope of the ridge to Liouville and St. Julien. Precaution sent these cars at night, except in an emergency, as the roads were open to enemy view. We had not yet travelled the roads at Beaumont and so were not weightily impressed with the dangers of our new work. The guns thundered away from ridge to ridge, lighting up the night sky in a pretty picture of flame. But the men on post slept peacefully in one of the houses of the town, scarcely shaken from their repose at Neufchateau.

The different story was being enacted by the men sent to Menil la Tour. They had reported to the 102nd Ambulance Company. Half of the cars were sent almost immediately to Mandres where a dressing station had been set up in an abandoned house at the Beaumont end of the village. The cars were lined up in the yard and the men utilized the second story of a nearby house for their quarters. Everything seemed very quiet. True, the front trenches were scarcely two miles away, just outside of Seichprey, but Mandres had been shelled only slightly and the sector was known to be quiet. Two cars were sent on to Beaumont as an advanced post. Runs were made along the ridge to Rambaucourt and Bouconville and, after dark, to Seichprey. The road to Seichprey was very narrow and it dipped sharply as it led into the destroyed town. Here the men found shell holes and evidence of war in plenty. In fact they were forced to shut off their motors at the aid station lest the Germans hear them. But such things only gave a thrill to the work. Nothing had happened here for four months.

Five days of acclimation passed and the men had adjusted themselves to the new situation. A few shells had disturbed their peace of mind on the



The Kitchen at Vignot

“Dead Man’s Curve” made where the back road from Mandres to Beaumont makes a sharp turn when it joins the road from Bernecourt and goes up the rise to Beaumont. This curve was in good view of the enemy observers and was so situated that fast time was impossible on either side of the corner.

It was about three o’clock on the morning of April 20th that the storm

broke and the German attack commenced. The town of Seichprey was literally demolished by shelling and the towns and roads from Beaumont along the back road through Ansauville to its junction with the Bernecourt-Menil la Tour road were heavily bombarded. Picked German shock troops forced the Americans out of Seichprey, were in turn driven back, and fought in the town itself until middle afternoon when the Americans, with French assistance on their right, retook all of the ground that had been lost.

The members of the section had gone to sleep in their quarters as usual on Friday night. Early the next morning the heavy firing fortunately awoke them. A gas shell exploded in the chamber above and forced them to use their masks. Doing this, they huddled about the room and watched a German aeroplane fly low outside and machine gun the streets, and an immense rat stagger from his hole in the wall and suffocate.

The first call for an ambulance came in at 6 o’clock. The quarters were abandoned and the men used the dressing station and its two very good dugouts for the rest of the day. Despite the shelling the cars made trip after trip. They ran into Seichprey where a new aid station had taken the place of the old one whose personnel were all prisoners. It was on the Seichprey road that the explosion of a shell blew McGuire’s car into the ditch. He was temporarily stunned but recovered sufficiently to drag his aide, whose collar bone was broken, into a nearby trench. Assistance came to the men and McGuire took the first opportunity to return to Mandres and his work. His car became the protection for a machine gun and was drilled through and through by enemy fire.

The extra cars from Menil la Tour were brought into the work and five cars were rushed from Vignot. The fighting itself slackened when the Germans retired from Seichprey but, as if in revenge, the shelling of Mandres continued as heavily as ever. The yard of the dressing station became the apparent target of the enemy and there were narrow escapes from elat



French women at the village wash tub in Vignot



Gillett and his first car in the yard at Beaumont



Quoits at Lagney

Roland and his friends

A day off

The Mayor's Daughter

The Valley from Lagney

while getting out of the yard for calls. One shell narrowly missed several men when it exploded on the top of one of the dugouts. Darkness brought no cessation in the firing and Lieutenant Colby, the 102nd medical officer, decided to abandon the station as unfit to work in. Several cars, with the fresher men, were left to make the calls to Beaumont and beyond while the others pulled back to Rehanne Woods. Sergeant Kendrick, who had done heroic work all day and who was badly gassed, along with seven others, also gassed, were among those who went back. They were sent to the hospital. Cars ran from Beaumont to Menil la Tour all night. Though the traffic was heavy, good time was made on the roads. It was 4 o'clock in the morning before the pressure relaxed and the battle of Seichprey could be declared as officially over.

The sector settled itself into a place of relative quiet after the initial excitement of April 20th. A post was established at Ansauville. Relays were made to Beaumont from which cases were evacuated to the dressing station at Rehanne Woods. We grew to like the work and found that the time slipped away rapidly. McGuire received a Distinguished Service Cross and Kendrick a Croix de Guerre with the gold star of a French army corps for their plucky work at Seichprey.

On May 21st there was a little readjustment. The section gave up the post near Vignot and the cars were called in from Menil la Tour. A central depot was established at Lagny, a little town on the side of one of the hills overlooking our entire field of operations. New posts were added. One was at Raulecourt, under the nose of Mont Sec but very quiet as the ground was impassable between. Others were at Berne-court and its advanced post, the quarry, very close to the lines but with a fine dugout deep in the hillside.

The last few days at Vignot had been pleasant, especially since the weather had sent us to the river nearby for cool swims, but it was at Lagny that we began to get the most enjoyment from our days off post. Beginning in Fraser's guardianship of the kitchen on the way from Vignot when he watched Woodell's kindling, coat, and valuables burn up in the oven where Tom had put them for safety, we had a royal time. It was May and we lived out of doors every possible moment. Our quarters were in a neat looking house on the edge of the town. There was one garden in the rear and another between us and the village church next door. We lived upstairs in what used to be a stable loft. The house was used by our Lieutenant and some French officers. The kitchen was on one side of the front yard and the garage in the stable below our sleeping quarters. We had little to object to in our surroundings yet found the view and our neighbors the real attraction. I have written of the picture which the valley made from here as it stretched beyond Menil la Tour to Beaumont on the ridge eight miles away. Here little puffs of smoke told us of the enemy activity of the moment. Of the neighbors something must be said. The Mairie and the school were housed together just across the street on our right. Here we found kind friends in the school teacher and his wife, who were always solicitous over our comfort and for any men who were ill. Somewhere behind us, on up the hill, lived little old Roland, a queer, jolly Frenchman, fond of talking with the boys, and comical in his attempts to amuse us. This village had lost few of its people by reason of a fear of the Germans. The enemy had not reached the town in 1914 and failed to molest since. The mayor was the representative head of the town's best family. There was little question of that. We found him and his family, particularly one daughter, worth cultivating. It was at this time that Signor and Snader formed the yet unbroken habit of doing our camionette service. We exonerate Henry but suspect that Horn found something besides the pleasure of talking to a pleasant young woman to draw him almost daily to the mayor's cafe.

The front was so quiet during all of May that we found time to continue the baseball begun at Neufchateau. The French game of soccer, played in the old service,



*Beaumont
Ansaerville
Beaumont*

*The Quarry
Ansaerville*

also had many converts and we developed a first class team under the tutelage of Snader and Luykx. We were now a unit. Little causes of friction had been subordinated to our front work. The change had taken place which did more than anything else to weld us into a group capable of using its greatest ability for service. The transfer of Lieutenant Anderson to take charge of an automobile park sent us Lieutenant Leroy M. Smith in his place. Lieutenant Smith proved to be the right man to command the section. We were old volunteers and still of the volunteer spirit. While an old army man, Lieutenant Smith recognized our individualism and utilized it to obtain more efficient service from the section, given with a better spirit, than ever before. We appreciated the attitude of our new Lieutenant at Lagny, and we appreciate it even more so to-day. Together we have proved that a man may command a section in the military sense and still be a friend and a comrade.

Sergeant Kendrick, well recovered from his gas attack, was attending the school for sergeants at Meaux. Wallace McCrackin had succeeded Sergeant Byerly as the third sergeant. With these changes we met the second trying period in the Toul sector.

On June 12th the Germans made an unsuccessful raid which brought rather stiff shelling during the night. On Sunday, June 16th, the Germans commenced shelling the villages of Royaumeix and Boucq as well as the usual points of attack. These places were inhabited by civilians who fled for safety as the bombardment continued. A few



The car in which Gillett was killed

soldiers and a few more civilians were killed or wounded. This renewed activity of the Boches of course brought out our reserve cars to aid the men on post. The pressure on the men and the shelling was particularly heavy at Beaumont where the car driven by Gillette was demolished in the yard of the dressing station. Things quieted down for two days and then the activity began once more when the Americans sent over a gas attack on the morning of June 19th. Of course the Germans replied with a heavy artillery fire. Our cars were once more called upon to do very dangerous service. We responded but it cost us the life of one of our members.

The Beaumont post again sustained the brunt of the shelling. The yard at Beaumont and particularly the road leading along the ridge by the batteries became almost uninhabitable. Gillett and Swain were on post here. In the midst of some of the heaviest shelling of the day a call came in for Conde. It was agreed that Gillett should start and Swain follow in a short while. Before Swain's turn came a runner rushed in to say that the first car had been wrecked. The aide of Gillett followed, himself wounded, and reported that Gillett had been instantly killed along with one of his patients when a shell had burst in front of the car. Swain immediately set out for the post. When near it, the shelling became so terrific that he was forced to abandon the car and crawl along the ditch with stretchers to where the first car had been wrecked. A dressing station orderly was with him and helped with unusual pluck. The wounded men were carried to a place of temporary safety and later brought into Beaumont. The body of Gillett was cared for there for us by Lieutenant Comfort, in charge of the station.

The members of the section were greatly upset by this loss. Gillett had been one of the best liked men in the whole group, and everyone felt personally the gap that had been made in our ranks. This feeling was shared by the 102nd Ambulance Company with whom we were working, and they sent us a note of sympathy that meant much in cementing our already strong friendship for them.

The funeral was held on the afternoon of June 20th. The section, with the 102nd Ambulance Company as the guard of honor, marched at half step while an ambulance bore the body to the military cemetery at Menil la Tour. The Episcopal service and the fired salutes were the last visible homage to Tod Gillett. But we have never lost our own memory of him and feel no gathering complete without a silent tribute to his name. A Distinguished Service Cross was sent to Gillett's parents a little later as a proof of his bravery and devotion. Swain also was similarly recognized for his courage.

It was very soon after the death of Gillett that the 26th division left the Tou! sector. We were transferred to the incoming 82nd division to carry on our work as before. Several new posts were added and twelve men from the 307th sanitary train were temporarily attached to us. Our new posts took in Noviant and some posts up in the hills on the right of the sector to which winding roads led through ravines and along the base of ridges well protected from the enemy fire. The work here, at St. Jacques and St. Quen, was always very light.

We missed the boys of the 102nd Ambulance Company but made new friends among the medical corps of the new division. The 26th Division had given us a citation for those men in the work at Seichprey. We appreciated this as evidence of what we already knew, that every one had done his best in a new and trying place and had acted worthy of what we all felt to be the honor of the section.

We were familiar with our posts and we had come to take our life in a v e y matter of fact way. There were a few men who imagined for a time that a "box barrage" was always prepared for their benefit, but most saw things simply as a dictation of chance. To come and go on post was our little job. Once it was over and we came in for our repos at Lagney we forgot wounded and shells and threw ourselves into our camp life with a zest that meant lively soccer games and a surplus of fun in whatever we undertook.

Some French troops were stationed for a few weeks at Beaumont. With them we renewed the volunteer days. French also garrisoned the defences behind us which matched the stronghold of Mont Sec. Them and their compatriots we determined to remind of America's great holiday in royal fashion. We armed ourselves with a camionette full of wine and piled into the truck for the trip up the hill to the field on which we had scheduled a soccer game with a French team. The game was a good one. We won by a score of four goals to one and had to hustle every minute to do it. After the game French and Americans drank to the success and happiness of each other's native land and their own continued friendship. Harris led the celebration as usual but was pressed pretty hard for the honors by all. The return down the hill was marred unfortunately by an accident. Four of the boys were sitting on the tail gate of the truck when the chain holding it broke as we were making high speed on the down grade. The men



The grave at Menil la Tour



"Make him drink it"

*The Soccer Team
The Field Clerk*

The July 4th Celebration



Requisitioning Horses

commission in the Ambulance Service as first lieutenant. Sergeant McCrackin assumed charge until the return of Sergeant Kendrick.

The Germans had lately formed the habit of trying to bomb Toul. The passing of the planes over Lagney on clear nights necessitated our using more care with our lights than before. Lagney itself escaped from the menace although stray bombs hit in remote spots.

On the front our work was little varied. The new division was a little slow in breaking in and the drivers found some trouble with overzealous guards. The habit of a guard to challenge from the dark roadside, coupled with the noise of our motors, left us unable to account for ourselves quickly enough. Kerr narrowly escaped death when a guard fired at his car since it failed to stop at the command. But the newness wore off and the division soon rounded into extremely creditable shape.

Impromptu parties after supper had become the customary thing. Two of the cafes drew most of the section's patronage and were the cause of many odd episodes which lent a touch of humor to our life. The "Vampire's" was an unusual place, equipped with a windowless room in the center of the house that hid numerous suspicious gatherings. The "Louse House," possibly vulgarly, yet well named, was nearer our billet. For a time we took almost personal interest in this family. A little laxity in the clothing line brought a contribution, and some of the boys made brave attempts to overlook other failings. But there proved to be too much to forgive and we brought out a "declaration of war" on the "buzzard" and his whole clan which Cook Woodell energetically carried out.

Little John, a French orphan cared for at the school, was of an entirely different sort. He was a likeable boy and made a friend of us all. We really missed him when he had to leave to visit relatives.

Incidental to hot weather and the village, we mustn't forget the fire in the school at Lagney. How the thing started or what caused us to notice it is forgotten, but the firemen of the section turned out quickly to do the blaze up in proper style. They found the Lagney department right on the job. Roland always was a good worker. Together the compatriots soon had the fire under control. The section boys were about to finish up matters. But not for Roland. He wouldn't do a bit more until the occupants of the house refreshed the workers properly. That done, more fire fighting until the last trace of the blaze had disappeared.

On July 11th we saw a little by-play when the French military authorities requisitioned more farm horses for the army. The people brought their horses from the surrounding district to be passed upon. The animals were trotted up and down in front of our billet and then those capable were told off for service. Quite a civilian crowd gath-

were dropped into the road and cut badly about the head, when they struck. Gaynor and Willard were hurt but slightly while Snader and one of the men attached to us were injured so seriously that we took them to the field hospital at Sebastopol, not far from Menil la Tour. Here they recovered easily, Snader in a few days.

On July 9th Sergeant Klein left to accept a

ered. But we saw the town at better advantage a little later when some French moving pictures were thrown on a screen hung across an alley near the mayor's house. The people, soldiers and civilians, sat on doorsteps, on the ground, or on benches placed even in the street, and were oblivious to their surroundings for over an hour. Such is a touch of France, just behind the front.

The French Independence Day, July 14th, saw another soccer game with a French team. We won once more, 2 to 1. We had developed some stars and welcomed a match with all comers. In the evening the entire section attended an entertainment in an abandoned Y. M. C. A. hut, just down the hill, by some American entertainers from Toul. Our Lieutenant had arranged this for the section and the few Americans in the vicinity. The singing was very good and a novelty for us at that time. We brought the piano back to the billet after the entertainment and sang and danced in the road well into the night to good old American tunes. The next day we took the piano from the truck and put it into the stable, a corner of which we had cleaned up for a music room. Here McGuire and Gaynor brought their stringed instruments and led the crowd in the old pieces, Rosen acting as impromptu accompanist on the piano.

We were having a genuine picnic now and tried several original stunts to liven up things. Snader and Harris had returned from the first permission of the section and Willard and Fraser had left for Cannes and Nice in their turn. Snader and Harris came back broke, which is really why they came back earlier than necessary—and we felt natural again. A section paper, only of one sheet and typewritten, but full of clever humor and hits, appeared, placarded on the side of the kitchen trailer. Smith, the section's versatile clerk, McGuire, and Harris were the sponsors for it. Its extras always brought the boys out in force, especially on the days that Snader and Woodell were rivals for the baseball championship.

Soccer had given way to baseball when Cook Woodell had praised his pitching arm in the hearing of Horn Snader, a veteran of diamond tactics. Of course two teams were chosen and the feud was settled with bats. Snader obtained the first blood but the shifts on post gave Woodell the desired chance and his team retaliated with victories. The games were featured by much keen playing and less keen umpiring. When Carey umpired the player who shouted the loudest got the decision. With McGuire and Smith we had a judicious adjustment of poor decisions which left both teams well suited. A section team was evolved from these contests which gave a good account of itself in a game played with some American engineers just before we left the sector. We lost the game, 3-2, due particularly to the pitching of Lieutenant Crowell, once with the Philadelphia Athletics, for the winners. Yet we played better than usual, especially McEnness, who outdid his former efforts in the pitcher's box.

Our Toul experiences closed with another rush of work occasioned by a German gas attack launched against the 89th division which had come in to relieve the 82nd. We were to move with the 82nd but volunteered to help the 89th in the plight which unexpected casualties and a dearth of ambulances left them. On the morning of August 4th the 82nd made a successful raid against the Germans at Flirey. Our cars put in many trips but handled the work easily. The division gave way to the 89th during the next few days and only a few of the medical corps were left on the grounds when the Germans retaliated with a heavy gas bombardment on the morning of August 8th. The new division suffered about 1000 casualties that morning. We had two members gassed, Soles and Shusko, who worked splendidly at the quarry post. They had worn their masks from 10 p. m. to 6 a. m., but had been unable to escape the fumes and still carry the wounded.

Our cars were pressed into service and we brought hundreds of cases from the quarry and Conde. Lieutenant Smith personally installed an emergency aid station for the men on the Conde road near the old Conde post and directed our hurried evacuation of the gassed cases. The men were laid on the ground in rows. A heavy mist alone

saved many lives as a view of the post, possible on ordinary days, would have made it impossible for the aid station to care for the men. We thought our work at an end when we had taken the patients to the field hospital. However, we were again called upon and helped evacuate the field hospital to the base hospital at Toul. Those who still had lights were able to use them when we reached Menil la Tour on the road towards Toul. We made good time, yet were unable to finish before 5 o'clock on the morning of August 9th. Every man was put on a car. Lights, good for the driver, meant blindness for the man without them. Several accidents were just missed from this cause, on a road full of hurrying ambulances. Smith, away from a car for some time by reason of his work as section clerk, essayed a "come back" as a driver, and got along finely until he became stalled by one of the railroad tracks used to bring up military supplies. But he came out of his predicament with the surrender of only one tool box to a dummy engine and brought his load in safely. No other of our ambulances was damaged although several of the G. M. C.'s were wrecked during the night.

By 2.30 in the afternoon we were on our way to Nancy where we reported to a French Caserne for a billet, to await the destination of the 82nd division.

We left in a happy frame of mind. We had seen service, had found ourselves, and were content with the changes which military transfers had brought the section. Though we mourned the loss of a comrade we knew that we had fared very fortunately in our work. So we left the past and resolutely faced the new fields, yet unknown.



Moving day at Lagney

CHAPTER IV

PONT-A-MOUSSON



It was very difficult for us to realize that the city of Nancy was only fifteen miles from the front line. Her streets were crowded with prosperous looking people, her cafes were the scenes of afternoon gatherings which challenged the nearness of the German. Even the stores were putting up a brave appearance as if to belie the presence of war.

The Germans had failed to take Nancy during their great onslaught in September, 1914. This explained the city's apparent prosperity and the size of the population. The one fear was of air raids. A clear night almost invariably brought the vultures from Metz and sent the people into the abris which had become a necessary addition to every house. Spacious abris erected in the center of the city, in that part sure to suffer at every attempt to destroy the railroad station, were the refuge of those found on the streets when danger came with unusual suddenness.

Our home was in a wooden barrack in one of the Casernes of the city. Nancy had been a mobilization center and could accommodate 30,000 troops easily. The Casernes were similar, each a group of stone barracks with a parade ground in the center.

The morning after our arrival was utilized in the washing of the cars. A hose in the French and American Park opposite our own Caserne permitted us to finish this task in short order. A few loafed then, but most of us began a tour of the city. The first stop was, quite naturally, at the convenient swimming pool in that end of the city where warm sulphur shower baths and a pool of good proportions could be found. Some of us visited this building daily during our stay in Nancy. It filled a need which life at the front poorly provided for.












In the Park at Nancy



The work of a bomb

Explanation:

-  : Roads used by SSU: 647.
-  : Other roads.
-  : River.
-  : Front line.
-  : Woods.
-  : First aid post.
-  : Post with car stationed there.
-  : Post to which wounded were evacuated.
-  : Hospitals.

Section camp underlined in Red.

MARBACH-SECTOR.

0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometers.



The cafes, stores, and the parks, especially about the Place Stanislas, helped to make the time pass quickly. The section was given freedom to go and come and took no advantage of the liberty. It became the custom for the men to have supper at some restaurant in the city, but nearly everyone was at the barrack in time to stage the motley procession across the yard to the cellar of one of the stone barracks which we used as an abri. Sometimes the Germans were late and we had to roll out of our blankets to seek shelter. This proved to be a strain on our good humor, but we reinforced it with music and jokes to the accompaniment of dropping bombs in near and distant parts of the city. Often a few stragglers shared a downtown abri with its owner and found comfort, almost luxury, in many of these cellars.

Whether there were raids or not every day saw the section on the job, enjoying a good repos. Several baseball games on the parade ground limbered us up and furnished keen rivalry. A first and second team battled for honors, led by Swain and Snader. The first team always won. This always made the second team play the harder and kept us in good shape, in lieu of any active work.



Mess Time at Millery

the double-decked beds and remained settled for five days. But another unit needed our home and we were given two garret rooms in a house to live in. Our view gave us the Moselle river, hills stretching towards the old Toul sector, and at our feet, a pretty flower garden which had been cultivated carefully by the pleasant French family whose house we shared. The other view was the courtyard, of which our home formed one side. A manure pile was the chief ornament, with a sufficiency of mud and slime always under foot. But we had a suitable parking place for the cars, behind the barns and enclosed by a wall, and plenty of running water to wash in. A shed near the cars furnished shelter for a garage on the ground floor and an open air sleeping apartment above. There was, consequently, little excuse for a kick. So we set up our beds and settled into another routine.

Troops from the 82nd Division filled all available billets, the 307th sanitary train being our neighbors just across the front yard. They supplied the personnel for the aid stations and for the rear evacuation work. We, of course, confined ourselves

We were ready for the worst, supposedly a place in the drive, when we received orders to follow the 82nd Division. We brought up at Pont a Mousson. While this was a disappointment for the time being, events made it work out satisfactorily.

On August 16th we left for Millery, a little town half way between Nancy and the lines. Here we made our headquarters. At first we were assigned to an old barrack, barely off the dusty main road, which was used as a motion picture theatre. We played the host ourselves on our third night there and entertained our fellow Americans on beds and stretchers while flickering pictures jumped across the screen.

Three days in this barrack sent us into another, on the hillside just outside of the town. Here we carefully cleaned the straw and dirt from the floor and



A camouflaged road near Pont à Mousson

to the front line and brought the sick and wounded to two field hospitals, one on the edge of Millery, the other at Dieulouard, just across and further up the river. Larger cars took the cases to the rear.

The posts in this sector were a treat compared to the ones we had just left. Pont à Mousson, the town nearest to the line, lay on either side of the Moselle river and had only been vacated recently by civilians for a drive expected at St. Mihiel. Our first men on post found plenty of fruit and vegetables in the gardens which the thrifty French had cared for religiously despite the nearness of the trenches. Only a few houses on the right hand side of the river had been damaged by shelling. Many were the beautiful houses of wealthy French citizens and seemed to be in good condition. The business part of the city was apparently on the left side of the river. Here there had been more destruction, particularly about a chateau which we used as quarters for the car on post. A bridge, supposedly mined, connected the two parts of the city.

The front line was about a mile outside the town. There was a broad No Man's Land and a break in the usual trench system. Machine guns commanded all approaches and left the Germans little ambition to storm the town. A successful attempt would have brought them under the guns of the Allies who held the hills behind. The topography of the country is such that steep hills, deep ravines, and forests warranted both armies in keeping the positions unchanged from the early days of the war. So the boys found little to do upon post, lived as kings in deserted houses, and enjoyed life.

We had other posts. One was at Loisy, a billet town between Millery and Pont à Mousson. The others were in the Bois de Jure which lay to the right of and behind Pont à Mousson. Here there were three aid stations. Woods 3 had a fair dugout but the approaches to it were over poor and indirect roads. Woods 1 had an imperfect dugout while Woods 2 had none at all. The cars posted in these woods made few trips and found the principal danger to be from gas. A few shells screamed over the Woods 3 dugout and into hollow, reverberating echoes beyond. Preparations to expel expected raids sent a little excitement on occasion, while Johnny Taylor and Kirkpatrick found



One of the Pets

novelty when they drove their cars under armed escort at early dawn to the edge of the trenches for wounded.

Our cars made route trips for a time to several of the billet towns that top the hills overlooking the country to the edge of Metz itself. One observation post gave an easy view of Metz to the naked eye.

This was the routine which we took up. There was little to jar the usual. We dabbled a little in the theory of our work, which theory we could never practice, when Lieutenant David

Smith lectured upon the application of first aid. We enjoyed these talks, especially those that permitted Lieutenant Smith to branch out and develop his own personality. He came into close touch with the section and acted as our commander on several occasions when our own Lieutenant Smith was forced to be absent.

The almost nightly passing of the Germans on the way to bomb Nancy brought uneasiness but usually no physical harm to Millery. August 26th was the one exception. For some unknown reason the Germans let loose upon the town that night. Bombs struck near our second billet just outside the town, and one hit on the edge of a street, tearing out the front of a home and killing or injuring several women. The raid had sent us to the cellar as a wise precaution but the news of the tragedy brought one car immediately to carry the victims to the nearest medical aid.

On the 30th Sergeant Kendrick returned from the sergeant's school at Meaux and assumed the top sergeantcy of the section. He and Sergeant McCrackin formed an ideal pair that lent the proper efficiency and enthusiasm to get us into shape for the expected American drive at St. Mihiel.

We were interested in this effort. We knew the country to be fought over and realized that a large force could succeed by a circling movement where a small force would certainly fail in a frontal attack. The French had tried the latter since they had not possessed the men for the former and had lost. The Americans had the men and won easily.

The American barrage broke loose at 1.10 on the morning of September 12th. The quiet hills awoke from their four year sleep and the German strongholds were battered along the entire St. Mihiel salient. The part to be played by the 82nd division was unknown but we took our cars up to Pont à Mons, nearer to the lines, as a reserve and a precautionary measure. The men on the Pont à Mousson post encountered heavier shelling than usual on the roads leading out of the town. But the work in general was increased but slightly for the first two days of the attack.

By the 15th the division had advanced be-



Swimming in the Moselle



The goat

yond the town of Norroy on the left bank of the Moselle. A hurry call for assistance to two of our cars already working this post brought the entire section to Norroy during the night. By the early morning of the 16th the wounded had all been evacuated from the town and been taken to an advanced dressing station but a short distance from Pont à Mousson. These were mostly gas cases and the men were in frightful condition. Our own part of the work went very smoothly. Lieutenant Smith was on the ground in person and worked the entire night in direction of the evacuation. We were forced to use the back road to Norroy since the main road was impassable and under too direct observation. Here we found narrow temporary bridges over mine craters and scarcely filled in shell holes to contend with during the night. The old No Man's Land lay silent in the starlight. Trenches and shell holes appeared out of the blackness as grim reminders of the life of the past four years and of the fighting of the few days before. Teams, carrying munitions and food, wound their way slowly up the road, only to become stalled under the hill on whose top Norroy stood out, drawn clearly against the sky. As a crater blocked most of the road and only slow progress could be made through a hole which had been knocked in a wall to gain entrance to the town, caisson after caisson was stopped and our cars were held up. So we listened to the crash of the shells in the town ahead of us or to their whine overhead, and waited for the way to be cleared. At first we attempted to bring men from the town by hand, the two dressing station officers, piloted by Astlett, leading. This was slow work and we abandoned it in favor of a little extra persuasion which finally cleared the way and left us fairly free to finish the evacuation of the wounded. Gas masks were put on once or twice but gas gave us no real handicap, and we finished the night without mishap.

This was our first opportunity for real souvenirs. The relic hunters came out in force and we collected many spoils, chiefly a German goat, over whom Sergeant Kendrick went into ecstasy at the addition of a mascot. Closer acquaintance with the animal unearthed "dumbness" and other disgusting habits which finally drove her back into the cold world again.

After the enforced activity of the St. Mihiel drive quiet settled down, almost an oppressive quiet, which left us very little to do. Orders to prepare to move came in very soon, however, and we became busy with the preparation of the cars for a long trip. The duty done, warm weather suggested sports which brought back baseball and swimming for the hot afternoons. A swimming hole in the Moselle drew the boys almost every day and baseball games inaugurated the first and second team rivalry which war had temporarily banished. Snader lost to Swain as usual, 9-6, but the "master" gave the first team a tussle, especially in the art of umpire baiting that almost created real feeling in the sporting circles. Our inability to become suited with the arbiter whom fate invariably selected, gave a revival to soccer which resulted in a game with a French team, recruited from the French division which had relieved the 82nd. We won, 2-0, and were particularly elated as this same French team had beaten a team from the 328th infantry the previous day.

On the day after the soccer game, the 24th of September, we moved out of Milery. We were headed for the Argonne and stopped a few days at the park in Bar le Duc to do a little necessary repair work on the cars and wait for the division to become

settled in its new assignment. Our convoy to Bar le Duc was made in easy fashion. We had a picnic lunch on the roadside just outside of Void where some beer, brought hastily from town, served to give a suitable touch to the meal.

At Bar le Duc we utilized the empty barrack at the park for quarters. They were fortunately near our work but were extremely cold in the brisk autumn weather. Again the car routine was gone through. Again we tried baseball and again lost. This time it was section 554 who were successful. The score was 13-9 and the game was full of as many ups and downs as the score suggests. Bar le Duc itself gave opportunity for a few dinners and enough recreation to make us hate to leave. On the 26th we continued our way into the Argonne Woods and billeted at Passavant where we stayed until the 82nd Division went into the lines.

The division was held as an army reserve for some little time and only very gradually worked its way in behind the other forces. It was ready for an emergency. That came, possibly a little sooner than expected, and the 82nd performed its last service in the war in a manner that would have reflected the highest credit on any division in the United States Army.

The attack in the Argonne was begun by a 12-hour barrage which commenced at 11 p. m., on September 25th. We knew little of the course of the advance and had only the flashes of the guns to prove the intensity of the fight.

We lived during the first days of the attack in the lofts of different buildings in Passavant. Part of the men were in the attic room of a house, part in the loft of a barn, and the rest in a shed room over another little room in which we had set up our section bureau. A few cars went to nearby towns where troops were billeted to carry in any sick. Most of the men had little to do except loaf on K. P., and write long, overdue letters. We lost Cecilia, the goat, from our midst while here but shed no tears at her departure. She had become too fond of waking us with her bleatings at night to enhance her popularity with the majority.

There was a very fortunate addition to the section in Sergeant George S. Jackson, who filled the vacancy caused by the transfer of Sergeant Klein several months before. Sergeant Jackson was an old Norton-Harjes man and was known to several of the men. He was a hard worker and assisted considerably in the difficult task which our Argonne activities necessarily created.



Noon Meal near Void

We received our orders to move forward on the 4th of October. The 92nd Division succeeded the 82nd in the town billets and we packed up for the new field of work. There was a little difficulty just before we left as the new division appeared about to appropriate our occupied billets. Bloodshed was missed by a little diplomacy and we slept the last night in our home of the past ten days. It was but a short run to our new billet, a tent pitched beyond Neuville, in a region which was known only to advanced posts before the advance of the week before. It marked the entrance upon our last front activity. It was to be the toughest proposition we had yet tackled, and we were to come out of the task sure of ourselves and of the strength of our section.

CHAPTER V

THE ARGONNE



THE successful issue of the attack at St. Mihiel had stamped the Americans as capable of performing a distinctive part in the new operations of the Allied Armies. To attack on as many fronts as possible at one time was the secret of victory. The British in the north were wearing away the defence at Cambrai, and the French were advancing steadily further south. It was for the Americans to pierce the Argonne Forest on the left of Verdun and, once out of the ravines and woods south of Grandpre, to cut the railroad connections at Mezieres and Sedan. The Argonne Forest had witnessed no heavy fighting since the early part of the war. The German advance had secured the upper end of these woods. Further progress on either side was held to be well nigh impossible. The country was replete with natural defences whose capture would require the presence of troops never at the disposal of the allied commanders. The forcing of the valley of the Aire was thus logically an American task. We were a new army, we had almost unlimited resources, and could well reopen an hitherto closed theater of war.

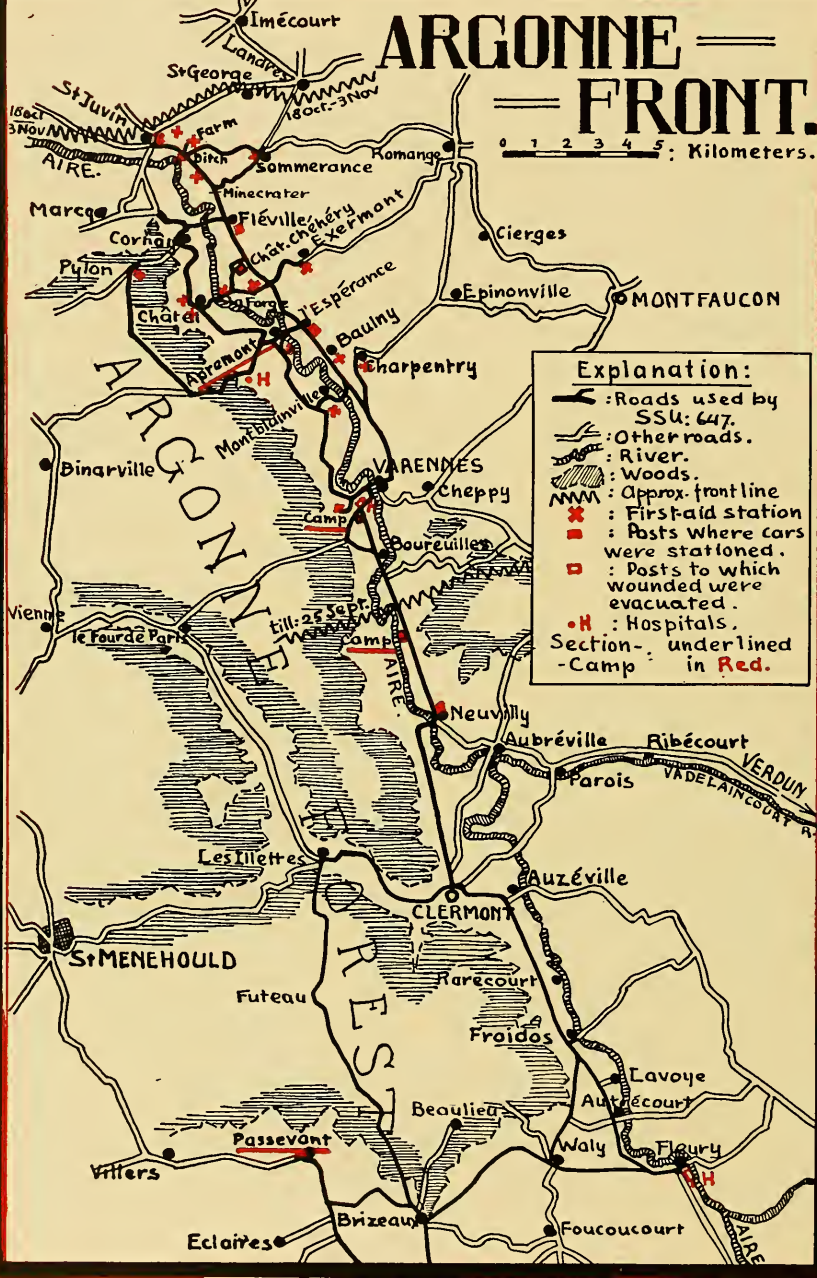
Events saw the accomplishment of all that the most sanguine leader desired. The American private soldier, fighting with a courage and perseverance equal to that of any poilu of France, stubbornly battled German machine gunners through thickets and over hills until Grandpre gave the opportunity for an open advance that sent the enemy into rapid retreat behind Sedan.



Where the Argonne battle began

ARGONNE FRONT.

0 1 2 3 4 5; Kilometers.



Explanation:

- : Roads used by SSU. 647.
- : Other roads.
- : River.
- : Woods.
- : Approx. front line
- : First-aid station
- : Posts where cars were stationed.
- : Posts to which wounded were evacuated.
- : Hospitals.
- Section - underlined
- Camp - in Red.

We are particularly interested in the fighting between Varennes and Grandpre, along the sides of the Aire valley. Here the 82nd Division operated and the most desperate fighting took place. It was the key to the whole advance. On the left the American line was supported by the French beyond Vienne-le Chateau. On the right the Americans extended their front a little outside of Danvillers.

The attack may be divided easily into three phases. The first embraces the initial onslaught which uprooted the Germans from their line behind Boureuilles and drove them through Varennes to the sharp slopes and thick woods that commanded the open Aire valley. The second phase meant the tedious, grinding process by which, inch after inch, the enemy fell back from all his natural footholds to the more open country beyond the town of Grandpre. The third phase saw a second great onslaught, almost a rout, that brought the Americans to Sedan where the signing of the armistice ended all fighting. The slow, dogged work of the second phase was the part of the 82nd Division. Two of its regiments entered the lines on October 6th. The entire division was involved within two more days.



A crater

Life in a tent promised novelties that set the men at work with a vim. We were about half a mile beyond Neuville and somewhat over a mile from Boureuilles where the Germans had held their old front trenches. There was a broad No Man's Land between these lines and those of the French which had been but a short distance from our camp. The tent was pitched in a little valley through which a railroad was being rapidly built to bring up supplies for transfer to trucks and so to the lines.

We made elaborate plans to make ourselves comfortable. The truck was the bureau, and tarpaulins were stretched between convenient trees as a covering for the kitchen and as an open air mess hall. But our little picnic ended quickly. The division had bivouacked in the woods back of Varennes, awaiting the order to go into the line. The section sent three cars on duty with these regiments and followed into active service itself on Monday morning, the 7th. Our dwelling was pulled down and the convoy started over the road which led through No Man's Land to the crossroads at Varennes. We went by the little villages of Vauquois and Boureuilles, battered for four years as front line points, and the gigantic crater holes closing the main road and necessitating a small detour to reach our destination. Torn wire barricades, fields plowed by the terrific American barrage, trucks lining the roads, waiting for the word to go on, spelled war in its hideous physical aspect on every side.

In Varennes our tent was pitched on an open lot cornering at a crossroads on the edge of the town. A few days later a field hospital was set up in tents directly opposite. Varennes had been in the German hands for four years and will be remembered as the historic town in which Louis XVI was stopped on his attempted escape from Paris. It is built on a hillside and stands at the upper end of the Aire valley. From it the main road leads along the right side of the valley to Grandpre, following the course



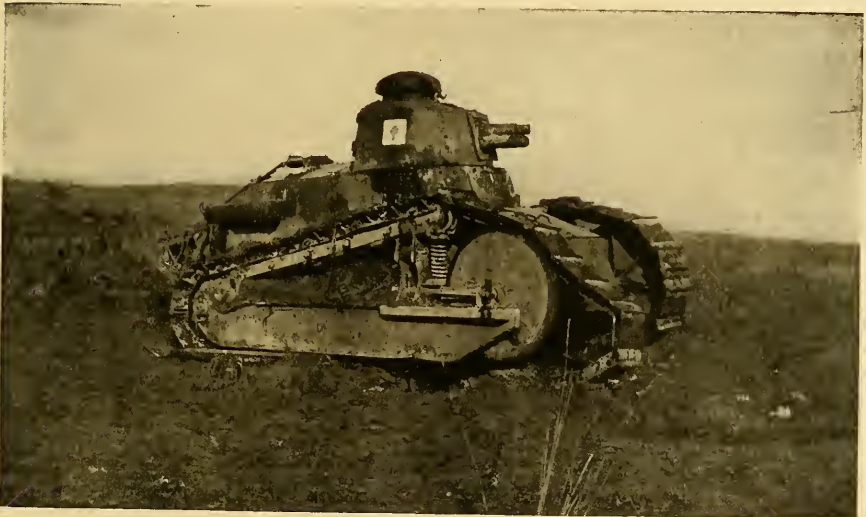
*Apremont
Flexville
Sommerance*

of the river yet built away from it so that there is a considerable stretch of low land between. On the left of the valley and part way up the hillside a rough and less used road followed several small villages to Chatel Chehery, lying on the crest of a sharp hill and the scene of prolonged and bloody fighting during the advance.

The 82nd Division had sent its vanguard into the lines when the Americans were fighting desperately to move forward from Apremont to Chatel Chehery. Some of our cars were called out on each side of the river on Monday, the 7th. A post on the left was established at Montblainville, a remnant of a town, about a mile from Verennes. The cars ran on into Apremont, about two miles further, the next day. Apremont straggled down the hillside from the level of the road to the riverbank. It was connected with L'Esperance, a group of two or three houses, by a stone bridge which the Germans had partially destroyed and the Americans had rebuilt with wood. The little town was a heap of ruins as a heritage from the 1914 fighting. Two buildings only appeared practically intact. One was the station of the now defunct railroad, and the other was a stone mill on the near side of the town, directly below the road from Montblainville. The latter housed our advanced aid station, and seemed well protected from any direct hits of the enemy.

The troops had advanced a little more easily up the right of the river. The country on this side also showed hills raising from the lowlands but was comparatively free from wooded growth. Here an aid station was installed at L'Esperance, just a short distance beyond Baulny, another little hillside village. L'Esperance soon changed from an advanced aid station to a dressing station where the wounded from our cars were transferred to the larger G. M. C. ambulances for evacuation to the field hospital at Varennes.

On both sides of the river the work developed rapidly with the intensive fighting. Chatel Chehery proved to a town very difficult to capture and hold. The cars on the right of the river were able to run further up the valley than on the left, and the men who drove into La Forge, a cluster of battered buildings about a bridge crossing



One of the American tanks disabled in the Argonne



Our home at Apremont

Gathering firewood at Apremont

The gasoline supply and messhall at Apremont

the river on the way to Chatel Chehery, could see the smoke of the fighting above them on the hills behind that town. No one will ever forget the calls into La Forge. The drive from L'Esperance out of the shelter of a little ravine onto a high plateau and then sharply to the left along an open road down into this hole decided at one stroke a man's grit for front work. The German artillery knocked at the bridge hour after hour but the cars kept up their work though the aid station was very close to the bridge.

It was just outside of La Forge that Titchener's car was blown into a useless wreck a few seconds after he had left it to go ahead and make sure of his way. It was here also that a man asked La Fleur for a ride and was killed instantly a moment later by a shell which, miraculously, missed La Fleur with all its eclat except for a sliver that meant only a scratched hand.

There were two other posts on the right of the river to which we made runs in the first few days of the very heavy fighting. A second road led into La Forge from the main road. It was a better road, about one hundred yards above the first, but it took longer to travel and was therefore little used. On it a roadside ditch gave a little protection for a lieutenant and his helpers who did their best for the wounded able to reach there. This ditch and the high land about it were the targets for German artillery fire during the fighting about Chatel Chehery. Every trip meant a series of thrills. The main road and the plateau between it and the river dropped sharply to the lower land beyond this post. On the right the high-land became only a ravine and rose again to shield Fleville, a town which the Americans had sacrificed many men to capture. On the left Pleinchamp Farm, lying on the low land under the edge of the plateau was a third post to which we made trips, though only at night for a while, since the ground about Fleville was not yet sufficiently cleared of the enemy to warrant exposure of the cars.

One particularly memorable trip was made to this post on the night of October 9th. A call came for four cars from L'Esperance. The trip was made without incident,



The bridge at Apremont, destroyed by the Germans and rebuilt by the American Engineers



Carrying Wounded

but we give a little credence to it since Burt reported having missed the turn and having gone well towards Fleville before discovering his mistake.

All this was a new life to us. We had served at the front but never in an advance of this nature which meant new posts every day, roadside aid stations, and the uncertainty which the constant shifting of lines caused. The roads were torn only in a few spots by bursting shells but the fields and banks on either side were ploughed and furrowed from Varennes to the scene of each day's fighting. Wrecked whippet tanks lay helplessly where a German 77 had found them vulnerable. Broken caissons, disem-boweled horses, and the forms of German and American soldiers lay in quiet groups here and there over the ground. Near the lines, bursting shells, excitement, and a duty in hand blinded our eyes to the wreckage. Here, where the wake of battle lay so still yet so plainly in view, it became a trial for the drivers to go by on the way to post. The imagination was too complete. It was terrible to drive time after time by a silent sentinel of German defeat which lay so long on the muddy roadside near L'Esperance.

despite the darkness, until the turn into the Chatel Chehery road was reached. Then gas shells began to hit in the fields on either side. Three cars reached the aid station and the drivers hurried to the dug-out to escape the gas. But the fourth car drove by the turnoff and almost around the curve towards Fleville before the driver discovered his mistake and swung around to the farm and comparative safety. The return trip brought everyone back safely, though a little upset from the gas fumes.

A similar instance of becoming lost by going by this turnoff was discovered in an unusual way. The men on post were lounging one night at l'Esperance waiting for their turn to go out when a German prisoner began to wax confidential. He claimed that while on advanced sentry duty he had seen a Ford ambulance pass him in the dark in the direction of Fleville and then re-pass him a moment later. He did not fire. The story may be pure imagination



An observation ballon ready for duty



Open Country near Sommerance

Guns on Sommerance Road

Country beyond Fleville

Death demands its tribute, whatever the uniform, but, oh, how we hated that form. It was an effort to be indifferent to such scenes. But we became so and carried forward the work oblivious to the death about us, only aware of the living whom we could save.

During all of these first days of the advance the tent at Varennes was our headquarters. Here cars were brought in to have new bands put in and other repairs made. There were a few accidents to the cars, though really a very few considering the stress of the work done. Here the men came in after the relief from post and threw themselves on cots or stretchers for what sleep the little time afforded. Day after day giant French and American trucks lumbered by in a steady stream. Everywhere there was hustle and noise among the ruins of the little town. The battle was being fought far up the valley but here the sinews of war were being hurried on that there might never be a shortage to cause defeat.

Our own life was rather tame for we were too tired to do much at camp. There was little except an occasional shell to disturb us. These came at noon for several successive days when the Germans tried to break up the detour below the town which enabled the convoys to get around the crater left by the enemy to block the main road. We watched for the shells daily and vacated our quarters regularly until the bombardment ceased. We intended to be distinctly not present should an error throw some shell a little short, for we were in the direct line of range. Little damage was done by any of this firing.

We moved from Varennes to Apremont on the 11th. The advance had progressed so well that it was necessary to have our quarters nearer the dressing stations. The mill, on the edge of Apremont, no longer needed as a dressing station, was our home. The cars were parked in the yard and the kitchen was hauled under the partial protection afforded by what was left of the roof of another building, probably once part of the mill plant. The river ran back of the mill and a dynamo had been installed and used by the Germans to furnish electricity for their quarters within a large radius. Later the Americans repaired the system and utilized it similarly.



The toll

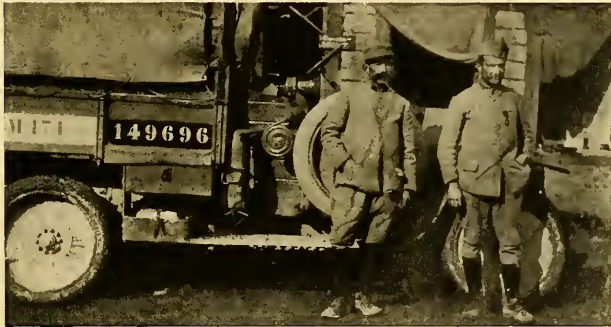
We slept in two reinforced cellars of the mill, in a dugout under the ruins of the adjacent building, or in the mill itself. Those who were good sleepers and liked fresh air chose the latter place. The walls of the mill were quite perfect and two good rooms were found for use by the Lieutenant and our Bureau. Fireplaces gave heat enough and we had reason to thank Providence that we had such good quarters to rest in.

It may have been this feeling which led the section to adopt a French orphan. Pictures showed the lad to be a pleasant little boy, and we are glad to have helped some one.

Meanwhile our aid stations were being pushed rapidly ahead. A dressing station was installed at Fleville and cars went forward to two ditch posts on the road to St. Juvin, or over the hill road to Sommerance where the medical officers had houses left standing in which to tend the wounded, though little protection from the shelling of the town which slackened only occasionally day and night at this time.



"Horn" and the camionette



The French Mail truck

It took real grit for those boys who made the first trips over this country. A mine crater blocked the road about a quarter of a mile from Fleville and necessitated the carrying of the wounded to this point by hand. From here the ambulances took them into Fleville and from there to L'Esperance. But this was slow work and the need was pressing. So Kerr and then Signor had their cars lifted around this hole and brought in the wounded for the other cars to relay to Fleville. Kerr stayed on the job for the entire afternoon, making trip after trip to the ditch posts, although the enemy artillery pounded the roads and adjoining fields steadily. Signor drove into Sommerance for the wounded. This road ran up and down over little hills, and, at this time, was for much of the way in good view of enemy observers. The Germans were only a little beyond Sommerance, fighting for St. Juvin. Both Kerr and Signor escaped injury very narrowly. Signor's car was pierced repeatedly, and Rorty, Signor's aide, had the breast pocket of his coat cut by éclat. The three men performed with such noticeable courage that they were rewarded later with an American decoration for their day's work.

At night engineers bridged the crater and all the cars were able to evacuate directly from the ditch and Sommerance stations. It was in front of the aid station at Sommerance two days later than a spent piece of shell knocked Kirkpatrick unconscious while he was loading his car. He, fortunately, recovered immediately and was able to go on with his work. For his pluck on this occasion and the picking up of several freshly wounded soldiers while under shell fire a little later he was awarded the American Distinguished Service Cross. Shelling continued to be frequent on these roads, as the Germans held Grandpre and a commanding view of the valley for some time after they lost St. Juvin. Grandpre fell at last by repeated attacks. But the line was kept only a little beyond it during the preparations for the third phase of the attack which threw the opposition beyond Sedan. However, the fall of Grandpre meant that the Germans were out of the Argonne Woods and that final victory was only a question of fresh troops.



Hunting relics

On the left of the river the towns were all on the hills above the valley. As the advance permitted we worked posts at Chatel Chehery, Cornay, and in the woods, the latter being the last hill post before the terrain dropped to Marcq in the valley again. These roads were about as those on the right though the undulating character of the country gave considerable protection to the cars. The night trips through these woods were the cause of many burned out bands. Hills and the inky blackness forced pretty slow progress mile after mile to the post above Marcq, particularly. Our trips on the left of the river grew infrequent after the division was relieved from its part of the line in that region. Its heroic work had carried the whole American line out of the Argonne woods but had left the division exhausted and so depleted in numbers that it was unable to hold the stretch of front it had had. Yet what was left of the 82nd still held on above St. Juvin, practically by nerves of steel alone, true soldiers to the last, in a way that will ever make those who realized their sacrifice proud to have been attached to them. The brown heaps on the slopes of Chatel Chehery, each machine gun nest with its dead defenders, spelled the reason for our pride.

Pleinchamp Farm was now the point to which we carried the wounded. Here we transferred our loads to the G. M. C.'s for transportation to the rear. On October 17th Fraser was hit by a glancing piece of éclat in the yard of this dressing station. It was a day of many trips and narrow escapes. He had just brought in his load of wounded when a shell struck close by and a small piece cut him in the throat. The wound was not serious and Fraser returned to the section soon after we pulled back from the front.

The halting of the advance led to our establishing a post at Fleville for the cars on duty. From here runs were made in turn to the ditch post and to Sommerance. Almost a routine of work was established for a few days and regularity was possible in the shifts on post. This was a little upset, however, on several occasions by calls for cars to assist the 78th Division. They had wounded stranded in St. Juvin with inadequate transportation to evacuate them. Most of our extra work for this division was on the night of the 15th. Fighting was in fierce progress at Grandpre the next town above, and shells made us uncomfortable repeatedly at uncertain intervals in our work. It seems miraculous that there were no casualties during those few days.

Fleville was kept as a post for the cars on duty only a little longer. The placing of heavy artillery behind the town drew the German fire and warranted a withdrawal of the post to Pleinchamp Farm, near Chateau Chehery, Divisional Headquarters. This was used as the evacuation post during the rest of our stay in the Argonne. The lines had now become practically stationary. Our work was lighter than before. A system of route trips was established and we were always in close touch with the pressure of wounded at the aid stations. There was occasional shelling but much less than we had been accustomed to expect.

As the fighting slackened aeroplane activity increased in the effort of each side to learn the plans of the other. Solitary German planes flew daringly well into the American area. They fearlessly attacked American observation balloons and destroyed many of them. These attempts always brought us out as an audience. The most clever feat was over our quarters at Apremont. We were eating supper when attention was called to anti-aircraft activity directed apparently at a plane high up and coming directly overhead. When above us the plane dropped as if hit and shot at a terrific speed straight downward. Then, when it seemed as if about to plunge into the ground, in fact, when several of the boys had started for the spot it was sure to hit, the plane righted itself and headed like a bullet for an observation balloon nearby. The observers dropped when the plane was upon them and red hot incendiary bullets ripped through the gas bag. In an instant flames burst out and the blazing mass dropped to the ground, yet not more quickly than the plane circled back towards its own lines. High explosives broke around the aviator but he disappeared in the haze, still flying safely. He was our foe but, somehow, we forgave him for this exhibition.

However, the Germans were not always successful. On another evening we watched an American plane drive a German behind the hill back of L'Esperance where the aviator was later captured. One German aviator descended in a parachute from his disabled plane near Sommerance. He was captured immediately and reached Fleville much the worse in the way of clothing because of the American Doughboy's craze for souvenirs. Scouting planes were in the air most of the time. Sometimes a group of fighting planes met and there was a set to. The honors were about even, we judged. We could seldom see the fights near enough to decide accurately.

It was also in the region of Sommerance that an amusing incident occurred through the installing of heavy artillery between the town and Fleville. The guns did not clear the road in several places and our cars were held up occasionally while the guns were shelling the Germans behind Grandpre. In this instance one car was stopped by the soldiers on guard who told the driver to wait for the barrage. A little thought brought reconsideration apparently and the ambulance was hurried on with the admonition, "The barrage is delayed, I guess. If you hurry you can get by before they fire." The driver did hurry, wondering a little how it would feel to have the top of his car lifted off by an outgoing shell.

The last days of our front life were easy for the men. Exceptions came once in a while as when Titchener had the body of his car destroyed by chance shelling at the ditch. But the ordinary trips meant few wounded and we soon brought in hardly enough men to justify our time on post. We worked on twenty-four hour shifts at Pleinchamp. Every three or four hours a car would visit every post and collect the wounded, reporting also the time for the next ambulance to follow. Special calls came once in a while. These usually sent us hunting over the known landscape after the wounded man. It was difficult to get through reliable messages owing to the enforced mixing and shifting of troops.

The life at Apremont to which we returned after our time on post had a good deal of monotony in it. Cars were washed when the pressure at the front slackened and were put in the hands of the mechanics for repairs. We K. P.'d as our turns came but weren't overworked on any job. Our mill home afforded several pleasant fireplaces and one room, especially, where blankets at window and door enabled the "hounds" to revive "Red Dog" and poker. Our section-library was still intact and there was plenty of writing paper to furnish the means for filling idle hours. Enemy planes came over for night raids but did no damage near the mill. Distance shelling, also, hit the hill above us at night but caused no annoyance.

Lieutenant Stiles, the Red Cross officer for the division, shared our billet and proved a god-send in the way of bringing us papers from the outside world as well as furnishing us with supplies of extra quality.

This was the time that the Turkish and Austrian appeals for an armistice were under consideration. Finally these armistices came. We were still skeptical about Germany but knew that the end was near. Rumor after rumor reported the immediate relief of the 82nd Division. It had done its bit in driving the Germans from the Argonne thickets. New men were now coming in to furnish the blow that would reach Mezieres and Sedan. The remnant of the 82nd was at last withdrawn on the 30th and 31st of October, and we were left with only our cooties to bother us for two days.

The third phase of the advance began with an attack beyond St. Juvin and Grandpre on the morning of November 1st. The initial resistance of the enemy soon gave way and the Americans advanced at a tremendous pace through the open country from Grandpre northward. Our curio hunters were out and followed the advance into the No Man's Land of a few days before. They secured plenty of excitement and good souvenirs for their trouble.

We loitered about, awaiting the order to move. It came on the 2nd and we pulled back to Les Illetes on the 3rd. The Lieutenant had been absent on special duty and

was brought back in the early hours of the morning by all night work on the part of the staff car.

The stop at Les Illettes was but temporary. Five cars were sent on special duty with the division and the rest of us went to Bar le Duc for further work on the cars. The same barrack as before was used as quarters. We celebrated our return from the front by suppers in town and plenty of noise in the evening. The next day Sergeant Kendrick received orders to report in Paris. We felt that to be his last night with us as a commission was thought to be the cause of his summons. So we let loose in a song fest and with hilarity that sent him away the next morning with the keenest regret over leaving us.

On the 7th we drove to Amanty where we used two barracks deserted by an aviation outfit as quarters. The barracks were so large that we utilized part of one as a mess hall and lived in real style for a few days. The five cars sent out had returned and a few new cars went for duty with the different infirmaries in neighboring villages where troops were quartered. It was but a short ride to Neufchateau and several trips were made to Base Hospital 66 with cases. The town looked familiar and we found a welcome and a hearty meal in the kitchens of the hospital from the men we had worked with the previous spring. We forgot the past and did our duty by the victuals set before us.

At noon on the day of the signing of the armistice we broke camp for another town south of Neufchateau. En route flags blossomed out as the rumors of the armistice spread. When we reached our destination, Clefmont, the bells on churches and townhalls were pealing a confirmation of the end of the war. Clefmont itself is on a hill and our billet was in a wooden barrack on the upper edge of the town, overlooking the surrounding country for miles, even to Mont Blanc, some said.

We hustled our cars into a line by the barrack and began celebrating. Some of us helped ring the bell, others just rioted with the civilians. At night we danced, drank, and rejoiced in the different cafes. Nothing was too good for us in the opinion of the town. Everyone was happy. Some of the people missed loved ones and were less demonstrative in their joy. Yet their quiet smiles told the true feeling underneath.

We remained here until the 16th when word came from our service headquarters to report at Vaulcourt for orders. This detached us from the 82nd Division and the members of the 307th Sanitary Train who had been attached to us for several months left to go further south with the division. They had done good work and we hated to say goodbye.

Our Lieutenant was absent in Paris and Lieutenant Wolf, sent specially, took us to Vaulcourt where further orders sent us on to Nancy to report to the Tenth French Army for duty with the Force of Occupation. Lieutenant Wolf left at the return of Lieutenant Smith. Sergeant Jackson also was ordered away to accept a commission in the Service. This transfer, with the absence of Sergeant McCrackin at the Sergeants' School, necessitated the appointment of three acting sergeants to assist the Lieutenant. Swain, Snader and Willard were selected. That they have succeeded remarkably well, despite the lack of a sergeant's warrant, can perhaps be best explained by the volunteer spirit which has helped solve so many problems in 647.

Our work at the front was over and we entered an entirely different life which was to bring us eventually to the banks of the Rhine itself. We left the 82nd Division proud of our connection with it. It was a draft division and the men had none of the associations which will make national guard and regular army divisions immortal. They saw their work simply as a task to be done. They claimed no glory, only a recognition of service rendered. Yet they have won undying praise from us who know what they did for their country and the fearful sacrifices they made.

For ourselves, we were glad that the war was ended and proud that we had accomplished the part in it assigned to us. We had tried to do our duty and a little more, and were conscious of no regrets but only satisfaction for work performed. The Argonne will ever be pleasantly remembered when our war experiences are retold.



CHAPTER VI

WITH THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION



HE city of Nancy proved to be more entrancing than ever in its victory regalia. Quarters in the same park as before, we looked up our friends, visited the places of rendezvous of the previous summer, and investigated every suggestion of entertainment offered by the awakened city, and within the reach of our depleted finances.

It was the period of reaction from the war strain for the people of the city. All who were not too bowed by sorrow gave vent to the great relief which was given by quiet nights, unattended by air raids, the visit of loved ones, to be exposed no more in battle, and the prospect of reconstruction and enlivened business, unhampered by the threat of war. It was also the period when the sacrifices of the French civilians became appreciated. There were the mothers who were yet hoping that a son would miraculously appear among the prisoners thronging into the city from the camps of Germany. There were the wives, vainly hoping for the return of a husband to hearten them for the rebuilding of their homes.

Daily, French and English prisoners staggered in from the German borders and were cared for by the American Commissary, the Red Cross, and the Y. M. C. A. Whether the men wore khaki, the red trousers of the French soldiers in 1914, or the horizon blue, there seemed to be the same tale of starvation, abuse, and neglect, which had culminated in the wholesale opening of the prison doors after the armistice and the pathetic attempts of the weakened soldiers to walk through to the nearest French forces. We were glad to help two British soldiers at our billet, and managed to see them safely on the road to Blighty.

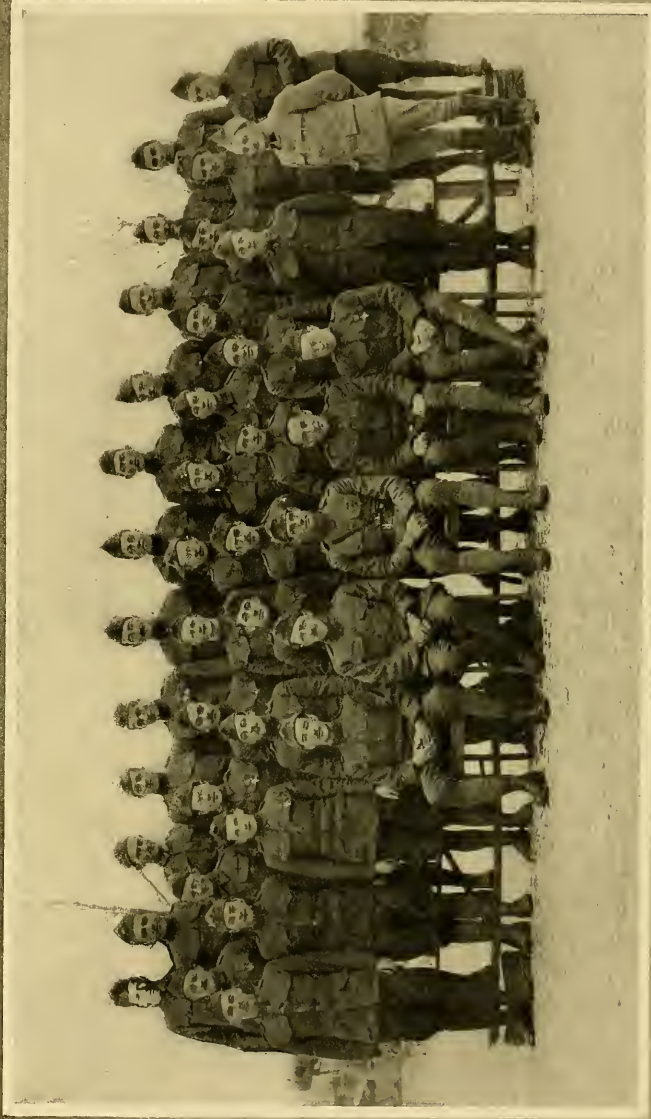
Our own life was as trivial as any repos. We took more baths, were equipped with much needed clothes by the local Quartermaster, cleaned up our cars, and continued to discover new joys in Nancy.

The soccer team was rejuvenated and played a team formed from several clubs about the city. We won once more, 3-2, and the team was duly noticed in the local paper, much to the satisfaction of some of the soccer enthusiasts.

We had so little to do about the park where we were quartered that the French Captain in charge solicited our co-operation in making mats for camion radiators. Fortunately we received our moving orders before disgust at the job was given proper opportunity for expression.

On the 26th of November, two days before Thanksgiving, for which we had planned a sumptuous banquet, we were ordered to proceed with our cars to St. Avold, in Lorraine. We left early on the morning of the 27th.

We made very good time until we reached the edge of the old No Man's Land where we ran into the trucks and infantry of the Tenth Army moving forward into the new territory. For awhile our cars passed the slower trucks without difficulty. It was the narrowness and unevenness of the road through No Man's Land itself which brought our first trouble and forced us into the line of the other convoy. Attempts to get out once more were prevented by a block of the trucks and the refusal of the French traffic officer to permit our light cars to run ahead. A perhaps natural reaction, with the



The Section in Germany

peace, to American methods of hustling ahead on the road seemed prevalent among our allies. Usually tolerant of such things, we became rather exasperated this time as the sun got lower and we were still far from our goal. However, there was no help for the delay until the convoy reached a fork where we were able to get away from the trucks.

There was but a little strip of battered country on either side of the lines in this region, and it took but a short while for us to get into the yet pretty and prosperous Lorraine which had been the sore spot for French and Germans so long.

It was 10 P. M. when we pulled our cars up to the curb in the public square in St. Avold. A big receiving stand was still decorated with the flags festooned in honor of the triumphal entry of the French troops a few days before. As it was well towards midnight we saw little of the town itself, and heard only snatches of German conversation to betray the presence of curious civilians. We tarried in the square just long enough to be officially assigned quarters and then drove to a German Caserne where we parked our cars and cleaned up enough of the wreckage in one of the barracks to give us room for putting up our cots.

The next morning we finished cleaning up several other rooms, and began hunting souvenirs. This Caserne had been the scene of a riot of striking Austrian miners not long before. A neighboring barrack had been burned and the one we were in was piled high with refuse for similar destruction. The arrival of French troops, summoned by the mayor, had alone prevented further damage to the town.



The Caserne at St. Avold

As we had brought the provisions with us which we had planned to use in celebration of Thanksgiving in Nancy, Horn Snader did an extra amount of hustling, hired the management of a cafe in town to cook our food and permit the use of their main room for a banquet. Everything connected with the celebration was a success. There was just enough food, all well cooked, and just the proper quality of refreshing beverage. The usually trying period of after dinner speechmaking developed an almost unexpected esprit de corps and enthusiasm for continuing the comradeship of the present in the later years. Each man, from the polished Don to the most halting speaker, did his best to show the genuine feeling of comaraderie which, sometimes alone, had held the section together so long. There were toasts to our Lieutenant, to Lieutenant Kendrick, our old sergeant and now commanding officer of Section 649, who was with us, and a silent tribute to the memory of our deceased comrade, Tod Gillett. There was no trace of the strained suppression or hilarious abandon which some might look for in a gathering of private soldiers. We were different and we showed there that this war had created heretofore unconceivable possibilities in the S. S. U. service, which we had learned how to grasp. In the Army, we were not of it.

On the day after Thanksgiving we received orders to move to Saarbrücken, just over the boundary of Lorraine and in Germany itself. We made the most of pretty St. Avold that night, visiting especially a fete which the townspeople were giving in honor of the French liberators. As Americans we were necessarily outsiders in this celebration. Yet we managed to make ourselves inconspicuous and enjoyed what proved to be a very picturesque party.

In a large hall, with room on one side and in the rear for the tables of those who only drank and looked on, the French soldiers and the young girls and women of the town danced the old folk dances and marches which we judged to have been in vogue in the days before 1870. Everyone was happy. Even those who had had German sympathies seemed able to participate with the rest. The Alsatian headdress and costume of some of the women helped particularly to make the evening unforgettable.

We left for Saarbrücken on November 30th. It was not a long trip yet the change in environment was very noticeable. In St. Avold, while not everyone by any means was an allied enthusiast, there were enough to give an air of welcome. In the little towns nearer the border French flags and French greetings were found everywhere and grownups as well as children waved as we rode by. In Saarbrücken all was different. The children still shouted but only because they were children. The older people were curious but reserved and quiet. The only flag was the official French flag on public buildings. Many asked questions, some were talkative, but we were made to feel that we were in a hostile land. From now on we began gradually to search out the German point of view. We have taken it for what it was worth and have not let it interfere with our own, yet have tried to appreciate the why of all the great phenomena which brought these apparently peaceful civilians into war.

We remained but one night in Saarbrücken, as, except for four cars, we were ordered to Bitche the next day. We made a tour of the town quite thoroughly in that one night. All the civilians seemed glad that the war was over and apparently desired little more than the opportunity to resume their pre-war existence. A Belgian, acting as interpreter with the French, discovered several of us, eager to buy souvenirs. He proved to be a very valuable guide until he commenced to talk war with an elderly saleswoman in one of the jewelry shops. His resulting tirade, while perhaps well-merited, we were forced to quiet. But generally, the French and any other Allies stationed in town, were quiet and aloof from any bickering which so recent an armistice might well be expected



The section members awarded the D. S. C.

to cause in dealings with civilians. Throughout our stay in Germany we have found the French behaving everywhere in a most commendatory manner although in an admittedly trying situation.

We reached Bitche from Saarbrücken at noon on December 1st. It was a little town that nestled in a deep valley between very steep hills on every side. The descent

of the road into town proved a test for our brakes that kept several of the drivers pretty uneasy meanwhile. Bitche was most unattractive and we had little objection to another move which sent us to Zweibrücken on December 3rd. While at Bitche six cars made a trip to Saarbrücken with some sick cases. They found the four cars that had been left there working overtime in evacuating to the city's hospital. The men on the trip remained overnight in Saarbrücken and returned the next day. The four men, Kerr, Kirkpatrick, Signor, and Rorty, lately awarded the D. S. C., left for Paris at this time to be decorated.

At Zweibrücken where we stayed just long enough to prepare for a comfortable existence, we had quite wonderful quarters. The men lived in small rooms, four or five to a room, each room clean and with a tile stove to heat it. This was the nearest to Heaven of any of our quarters so far in France or Germany. It was with much impatient rage that we moved on to Ottweiler on December 5th.

Ottweiler was as objectionable as Zweibrücken had been attractive. Our cars were parked in a square in the center of the town. Innumerable meddling children necessitated a guard day and night about the cars. The town itself was so dingy and the people appeared so uncertain that many of the boys, in addition to the guards, went about armed. We were billeted in two separate groups, one in two empty upper rooms over a cafe, the other in a loft over a shed. Our kitchen was located at first near the second billet, but was later in a more sanitary place near our cars.

We should have been most unhappy had it not been our good fortune to find two cafes where we were hospitably received and given an opportunity to write letters and read, as well as buy drinks. The first cafe was quite near our two billets and was owned by a couple who had lived for some years in America. They were very polite and considerate to us, and we, in turn, respected the freedom allowed us. After we moved the kitchen we no longer ate here, but still continued to make it our headquarters. Some one of the men was almost always either writing or reading in the cafe during the day. In the evening we always looked in to talk with the son and the two young women of the house or dance with the latter when a musician could be found. One of the young women proved to be quite a patriotic little German. Not a Kaiser zealot, she still thought well of her country and its soldiers. Here we got the first touch of that German attitude which hates France and, to the American soldier, loves America, even though it admits the claim that without us France could not have won the war.

The other cafe was near our cars and was run by a quiet little German who was eager to do us favors and willing that we should eat our meals in his place of business. We gave him our kitchen refuse and



K. P's about the kitchen



Christmas morning

through too attentive work on the part of some to the business on an evening of other section members. Fortunately there was no real tragedy, and only fun has since resulted from those episodes. "Joe Garvey" must indeed reckon his prestige from those dark days of Ottweiler.

There was no word of protest on the morning of December 13th when we left for Kreuznach. The powers that were tried out a new road which looked very fine on the map but which proved to be a back road well gouged out by the passage of heavy camions and covered with standing water. But we had our luck with us as usual and plowed safely through the first of the trip, to be rewarded by beautiful cliffs and picturesque valleys on the last half. We had reached the Germany of fable and could well appreciate how one might love its beautiful scenery.

Kreuznach is a city of narrow streets and old fashioned architecture, especially noted for its mud baths. Although billeted on the edge of the town in what had been a mill, we had plenty of opportunity to become acquainted with the city. Its apparent prosperity, the thriving stores that belied the narrow streets, the hustling crowds, and the attractive shops and cafes, proved a Mecca for the boys. Joy was truly kept unconfined during our brief four days stop.

At noon, on December 17th, we drove to Mainz, the end of our long journey from Nancy. Burt and Snader had gone ahead to pick out quarters for the section so that our arrival found the first floor of one of the barracks in the Caserne Elizabeth all labelled for our occupation.

The trip from Kreuznach had been through particularly pretty country. It was at Bingen, "Fair Bingen on the Rhine" that we first saw the great river. We had driven along the left bank of the Nahe for some little distance, crossing it on the edge of Bingen near where it becomes merged in the larger stream. The Rhine is especially wonderful at Bingen. Here begins that section of the river known to legend. The terraced hillsides and sharp crags stand out against the sky, making a picture not duplicated anywhere. The road to Mainz lies nearly parallel to the river for some distance, only gradually working away from the stream. As we rode along it truly seemed the culmination of our work in France when an auspicious rainbow appeared over the right bank of the Rhine as a well interpreted sign of the passage of war and its hardships and the arrival of peace.

thought the bargain a good one. There were other cafes, mostly visited at night by some of the bolder spirits, where the native element was found a little less reserved than elsewhere. Many are the dark tales that arose and spread around the section from the nightly prowls about the alleys of the little town. It is said that threatened tragedy was twice narrowly averted



*Kreuznach
Mainz*

*Bingen
Ottweiler*

CONVOYTRIPS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY.

0 5 10 15 : Kilometers.



- Explanation:**
- ○ : Towns.
 - ▭ : Rivers.
 - : Border between French and Neutral terr.
 - - - : Border between Neutral and German terr.
 - : Routes taken by SSU:647 on convoy trips.
 - : Route taken by SSU: 647: towards Mainz Dec.1918; from Mainz March.1949

Mainz is a city of fair size and presented many attractions to us after the three weeks of travel from Nancy. It is beautifully situated on the Rhine and, although not as prosperous as several other German cities of our later acquaintance, it is a hustling town possessed of plenty of opportunities for amusement. It had a theatre where Opera could be heard, cafes numerous enough to furnish wide choice, and public buildings of interest to be visited if one cared. We considered ourselves extremely fortunate. The quarters we occupied were very clean and comfortable and we were attached directly to the Headquarters of the Tenth Army so that we had few small calls for cars, only being called upon when nearly all of the cars were needed and there was real attraction incident to the work.



The Kurhaus in Wiesbaden

and returned full of enthusiasm over its beauties. The whole section soon had the situation well in hand and the men began to enjoy their time in about any way they pleased. The Mainz folk proved to be quite friendly, becoming particularly so in the cafes. The "Americans" were so well treated that the French became a bit jealous of the attention paid us. We used a little tact, however, and refused to permit anything that would cause serious feeling on the part of our Allies.

Wiesbaden we found to be an exceedingly prosperous city, of much greater architectural beauty than Mainz. Its public buildings, particularly the splendid Royal Theatre and the Kurhaus, were easily the finest most of us had seen since we had left Paris. It was a tourist city and well repaid the many trips which we made there.

The second day of our stay in Mainz brought back the four men who had gone into Paris to be decorated with the D. S. C. They reported a trip full of amusing incidents, the best of which were built about the sale of the souvenirs which they had taken in with them. The whole section enjoyed the way the "dear" Y. M. C. A. secretaries, eager for a touch of the war, seized upon the Iron Crosses and helmets which we had found so plentiful on all sides. For once some of the men admitted a use for the organization.

On the 25th our first real work with the Tenth Army began. We made the first of a series of convoys into the neutral zone or into the German held territory after Allied prisoners whom it was necessary to move by car rather than by train. This first trip was but a short one into Darmstadt. We rather enjoyed the

The first week was spent in making a perspective of the city and vicinity. After the initial period of getting settled was over, cars were cleaned, and certain formalities of routine established, we were given a free hand and set out on our explorations. The "fiends" tried out the Opera, another clique made a round of the cafes, others headed out of town for Wiesbaden



A little foraging



The bowling alley

we brought in to Mainz. Most had suffered neglect and abuse before the signing of the armistice although, since, they had been well treated in the Darmstadt hospital. All were pretty pleased to get started home at last. We finished our evacuation about four o'clock and then made a quick return as we had prepared for a Christmas Banquet in one of the cafes of the town.

This dinner was nearly as good as the Thanksgiving celebration in St. Avold. Our food, as before, was excellent. Place cards, drawn by Mechanic Andy, proved to be clever and well appreciated hits on the boys. Less effort was made in the line of after-dinner speeches than before, but we succeeded in launching an organization to promote continued relationship after our return which we hope may be fruitful of result. Irving B. Snader was selected as President, Robert W. Bodfish as Secretary-Treasurer, and an executive committee was chosen, to consist of these two men with the addition of Jack R. Swain, Grant R. Willard, and Lieutenant Leroy M. Smith. The writing and publishing of the section history by Robert W. Bodfish was also authorized at this meeting. Plans for raising money to defray necessary expenses to be incurred in this work were to be formulated and reported upon later.

On December 28th we made our second convoy. This time the route led us through Wiesbaden, over hill after hill, much of the way along the edge of heavy forests, to Limburg. The roads, very good in dry weather, were covered with a slushy coating of snow that made them very difficult and dangerous to travel. We were held at Limburg itself through a delay in informing the authorities of our arrival. The English prisoners put themselves out to be hospitable in this extra time. We were fed and warmed in a manner that helped out considerably on a cold day.



Sickinger's

Darkness set in soon after we started back and the lack of adequate lights made the going difficult. It seemed only our luck again that prevented an accident with the

light cars. As it was, we became lost several times, much to the surprise of the "good Germans" who were dismayed at Americans in that part of Germany, particularly at night.

On the next day we had our third convoy, one of our best. Under the direction of a Swiss Major we went into Frankfort for some American prisoners whom we were to take to Mannheim. It was but a quick run to Frankfort from Mainz. The city was in the neutral zone and seemed to have kept its prosperity despite the German defeat. Frankfort was said to be the Socialist stronghold of Germany, but we found no visible trace of any unusual agitation or disturbance. Political sign boards were in evidence in the outer portions of the city, appealing for obedience to law. They seemed to have had the desired effect.

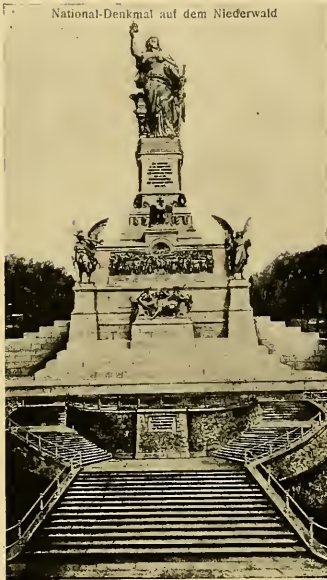
After passing the French outpost on the edge of town we pulled up in front of a hotel in the great square by the railroad station. We were immediately the center of a crowd of curious Germans, with all nature of information to volunteer, particularly about the lack of bread in the city. Whether they lacked bread or not, they seemed to have plenty of other things and were not starved looking.

The American prisoners were dressed in all manner of makeshift costumes which they had had to pick up in place of their own. Their treatment appeared to have been like that of princes in comparison with that of the British we had carried. There had undoubtedly been a great awakening by the Germans in the last few months, as the end was made certain, and the need of a spokesman for them clear. Several of the prisoners had been ambulance drivers, two being from S. S. U. 502. Their stories of choosing the wrong road or of being cut off within the German lines were easily appreciated.

From Frankfort we made a good run to Mannheim. It was through an exceedingly pretty country and, it being Sunday and a pleasant day, we found the younger



German cannon in the yard at Mainz



The Monument at Bingen

before. We were a curiosity which it was difficult for the Germans to understand. We undoubtedly caused comment, though, outwardly, the "stoical" enemy made no sign.

Giessen, itself, proved to be a town of fair size, well stocked with German troops. We chanced to meet a German guard marching out in full array, machine guns and all, as we entered, and had a good opportunity to view the officer's elegance and the soldier's habits at close range. The convoy went through the town to a camp just outside where the prisoners were kept. It was Frenchmen that we went for this time. Most of the men were so weak and sick from lack of food and the neglect of their wounds that they had to be carried on stretchers. A few Russians loitered pathetically about, literally men without a country. We were thankful to get out on the road again, as the atmosphere of curious, gaping Germans, responsible for the evils we saw, yet shirkers of that responsibility, was oppressive. Aside from our frequent halting by guards, and Rorty's endeavor to find an extra "foot" for his verse in a cabbage patch, our return was practically without incident.

generation of Germans in great evidence strolling along the shady roadside, oblivious to Americans, war, or almost everything else. We left Mannheim after dark, unfortunately, and so missed the scenery between there and Mainz. Worms was but a mass of shadows when we glided through, and town after town meant only another landmark on the road. We made excellent time and reached Mainz without incident a little after eleven o'clock.

New Years came and went quietly, without the celebration of the year before. Reports were flying around about the demobilization of our service. But there was nothing definite and we dropped the matter that we might get all enjoyment possible out of the present.

Our fourth convoy, and the one really the most worth remembering, was that to the prison camp at Giessen on January 3rd. Giessen marked our farthest into Germany, and our convoy drove, on a special pass, through the neutral zone, well into the part of Germany still under the control of the armed forces of the enemy. From Frankfurt north, while we were in a new country, we saw few sights different from those we had noted



Albert



A good haul
boys in rare humor at the end. A few appeared a little too talkative, perhaps, but there were no casualties.

On the 17th the section formally indorsed plans for raising money to print the section history and selected such of the former members of the section as they cared to be kept informed of plans for reunions.

On the 19th we moved across the drill yard into another barrack that the French might keep the housing facilities better grouped. Section 635 was on the floor above us and we renewed our former acquaintance with a few of the members whom we had known in Sandricourt. Section 625 was not far away in the little town of Bretzenheim, and Section 649 was also close by in Greisheim. We took especial interest in meeting the boys of 649 as we had met them twice during our work at the front, and as our former Top Sergeant was now their Commanding Officer. His visits to us were not infrequent.

On January 21st, the day after a second small convoy to Giessen and Wetzlar, five men from

On January 8th a similar trip was made to Wetzlar for more French prisoners. The Wetzlar camp was not far from that at Giessen. Here we found more Russians waiting for the opportunity to go home. Some, one in particular who could speak English, seemed rather friendly to the Bolshevik Government and saw labor opportunities could he but get home. Others were not so favorably inclined.

The Wetzlar trip closed our immediate work. True, we were still on duty with our cars and nearly every day some car went on a short run, usually about the city, but the convoy work was practically over. The boys were now well acquainted in town and killed the monotony as best they could. Certain cafes received most of the patronage and the section soon became more than a name to some of the people of the city. We shall never forget these folk, hiding well war feelings of every sort in their behavior towards us. From Sickinger's to the "Heiliger Geist" cafe we knew our ground.

On January 16th the Lieutenant served a birthday spread in one of the rooms of the barrack. It was a good get-together which left the



The Prison Camp at Giessen

the section bowled a similar number from 649. It was a close and lively match which it gave us particular satisfaction to win by over forty pins. Sickinger's cafe, the scene of this match and also most of our billard and bowling matches, was the rendezvous of the indoor athletes nearly every afternoon and evening. Herr Sickinger proved to be a most accommodating German and reserved his alleys for us during several nights of the week, securing as well a large English billard table for our exclusive use. The boys became quite proficient at bowling, pool, and billards during the winter. Several English soldiers, stationed temporarily in Mainz with the transport corps, joined us as long as they were in the city, and we had many close matches together.

We were really only marking time now, waiting for some new work or for orders to leave for France again. Rumors regarding the early demobilization of our service were persistently arising, and we felt very sure that the late spring would find us in the United States. The system of permissions, which had been allowed to lapse while we were in the Argonne, had been revived after the armistice and the permissionaires were taking their customary turns. The arrival of Stender and Savage from a visit at Nice and Mentone found us so hopeless for even a little excitement that we seized with considerable enthusiasm upon a few reported misdemeanors committed by the travellers and proceeded to hale "Jerry" into a mock court for refusing to purchase a drink for a tired Y. M. C. A. entertainer. The defense was helpless before the unreasoning indignation of the section and not even the defendant's sterling qualities were sufficient protection against the awarding of a fit sentence for the crime.

The fun enjoyed in this trial was so genuine that several of the boys made rather more elaborate preparations for a second mock court, this time in an effort to bring Jarvis Stender and Don Harris in as the principals. The dark days of Ottweiler, when Stender had an "encounter" with Harris furnished a pretext, and the men were called upon to appear. Bodfish acted as the attorney for Harris while Rorty defended Stender. The feature of the trial, in the midst of many comical incidents, was the bringing in of Stender's diary as evidence. The melting, pathetic, nature of the book, used to demonstrate the earnest desire of Stender for friendship with Harris, was so vividly used by Rorty that even the mouth of the supposed writer of the words was agape at the reading. Of course, both men were included in a sentence suitable to the misdemeanor.

Not to be outdone by the legal lights the section's reportorial staff awoke from a nine months slumber and the "Necturus", the old news sheet of the Lagnay days, was issued once more. Although it again had only a short life it served its purpose well.

The prospect of our being called into Paris soon put us in mind of our very noticeable lack of even the rudiments of military drill. As the Lieutenant was more than willing, we began drilling on the parade ground of the Caserne in the second week of February. Another trip to Paris by the Lieutenant and the transfer of the section's quarters to Bretzenheim, a village just outside of Mainz, prevented much training. We received enough, however, to overcome our rustiness, and found little difficulty in our "Army" experience later on.

Situated as we were, away from the American Quartermaster, and being unable to secure all needed supplies from the French, we had for some time been making trips to Coblenz to purchase from the Y. M. C. A. or Army Commissary, and secure whatever things the Knights of Columbus or Red Cross would give us. One trip had been to Metz, and the recent departure of the Lieutenant for Paris had been accompanied by the dispatch of two cars to Nancy for supplies. The trips to Coblenz were the real treats, however, and before we left Germany nearly every man in the section had an opportunity to go at least once with Mess Sergeant "Horn". These trips were so delightful in good weather, and "Horn", with his skilful manipulations of the country folk as well as the officials in Coblenz, became such an institution connected with our mess, that it seems quite permissible to describe one of these journeys.

"Horn" was an early riser on the days of his trips and the car invariably go.

away by seven o'clock. The road from Mainz to Bingen lay back a little distance from the Rhine, but there was always an occasional glimpse of the river whenever the hills dropped to the rolling plain. At Bingen a stop was usually made for refreshments before the second and most delightful part of the trip was undertaken.

Bingen is a quiet little town with its quaint beauty enhanced by the majestic river and the green, terraced gardens of the opposite bank. Standing high above the right bank is the "National Denkmal" to commemorate the victorious rising of the German people in 1870. It is a beautiful statue, even from a distance, and suggests, with the surrounding scenery, a wish that the people might have kept the simple, national feeling of that day and not transgressed the equally just realm of other patriots.

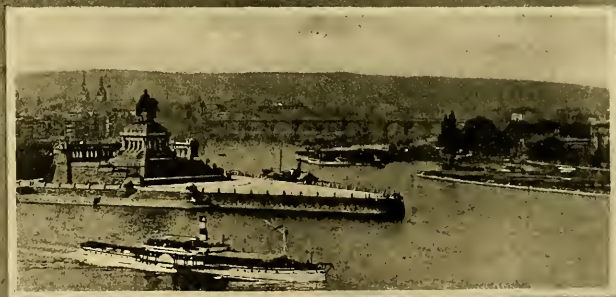
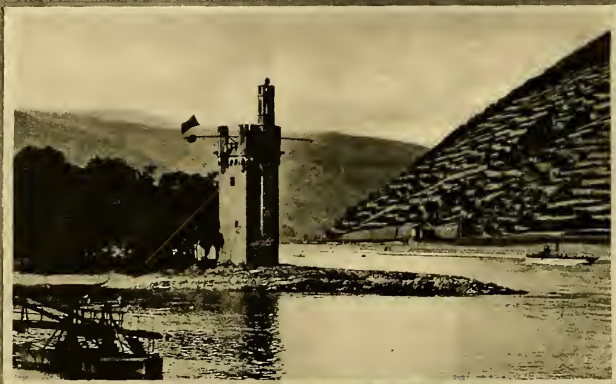
Close to the shore, scarcely a few minutes from Bingen, is the Mouse Tower, famous for its fable of the wicked bishop of Mainz and his starving people. The road follows the river closely for the entire distance. A railroad runs beside it which is crossed many times along the route. Occasionally the road pierces a gigantic cliff which rises too sharply from the water to warrant room for passage at its base. On either side of the river there is little room for the road and railway as the hills and cliffs rise very steeply. There are towns every few miles crowded against the hillside, usually in one single street on the river bank. They are pleasant little villages but their sameness, despite "Horn's" ready stories of incidents connected with their history, always made them interest the driver little and threw his attention again to the heights above the river where the ruins of the castles and forts of the olden time stood as grim sentinels of those days when no boat might pass up the stream unchallenged by the barbarous guardians of the Rhine. Such castles topped about every crag large enough to furnish a foundation, and one can easily picture the days of delightful amity which the occupants must have enjoyed with their neighbors, each holding only nominal obedience to a power greater than his own might of arm.

The steep banks of the Rhine are really the edges of a high plateau in which the river has cut its deep channel through the centuries. We could not distinguish the plateau and found the ruins on the rugged heights even more picturesque than had we seen the land behind them. We must not forget to mention the Loreley. This huge cliff carries with it a legend nearly as famous as the Rhine itself. The dangerous undercurrent at the base of the rock is still there but the Siren of the rock has passed into that mythology where so many heroes and heroines of the past have vanished.

By ten o'clock the car was invariably on the edge of Coblenz. This was the center for the American Army of Occupation, and we moved carefully lest the freedom tolerated at Mainz lead us into trouble with the American supervision of the city. Coblenz appeared very beautiful and the troops here had every opportunity to enjoy the material comforts which help to make life enduring. It was a delight to follow "Horn" about as he humored an exasperating Y. M. C. A. secretary, thanked a kind Red Cross official, or induced the authorities at the Army Commissary to sell him needed articles.

Early afternoon saw us on the return trip. The American flag floating majestically over the Ehrenbreitstein, Germany's Rhine barrier, made a lasting picture as we hummed back towards Mainz. Home before dark was usually our rule.

The transfer of the quarters of the section from Mainz to Bretzenheim altered markedly our mode of living. Most of the men slept in two rooms of an unused school, and the kitchen and cars were parked in an old yard in the rear. However, living here was not compulsory, and quite a number of the men secured rooms in private houses about the town. Rental of such rooms seemed very low, and the housewives were very attentive and kind. The only orders were that the men be present at a nine o'clock rollcall. They could do this easily and still spend their nights in Wiesbaden or Mainz as whim might dictate. Such a situation believers in rigid army discipline might find it difficult to condone. Yet, looking back, we saw in it a sensible solution of our necessarily monotonous life, a solution perhaps not possible for every unit, but assuredly very proper for us.



*The Moose Tower
Coblenz
The Loreley*

Our assignment to the Tenth Army had added a French clerk to our roster. Our first clerk left us in Mainz, our second, Albert Mounaud, had become an accepted member in good standing in all section activities before we moved to Bretzenheim. He had been a law student before the war, and found it easy and natural to mix with the men.

On February 19th the Lieutenant returned from Paris, bringing two important changes with him. The first was the appointment of Jack R. Swain as First Sergeant. Swain had been doing the first sergeant's work for some time and with such unusual success and lack of friction that every man welcomed his promotion. The second change was the transfer of Cook Henry M. Martinson to Base Camp, from which he was to be sent home immediately, and the appointment of Roger J. Williams as the new cook. Marty was a married man and deserved to leave for home early. Williams was popular anyway and did a good job in the kitchen.

On the 22nd Major Berle from the Service Headquarters inspected the section and pronounced us to be in finer shape than any section he had visited so far. He was then nearly through his route.

Section 644 arrived in our vicinity and Section 625 started for Base Camp and demobilization at this time. We were not due to leave for a month yet but were "all set" should we receive advance orders.

A circus in Mainz, attended by several, and a successful baseball game with Park A of Mainz helped to keep life moving. We evacuated a hospital nearby to one at Kreuznach, just to remind us of our official job. Really we were mighty impatient to start for Paris and America.

By the 14th of March Smith, Snader, and McGuire had definitely made up their minds to transfer to the Demobilization Camp at St. Aignan, become discharged, and enlist for six months work in Poland with the American Red Cross. Lieutenant Kendrick of Section 649, and Lieutenant Butkiewicz of Section 523 were to go with them. Upon the return of Lieutenant Smith who had once more been called to Paris on official business, the Red Cross enthusiasts started for St. Aignan. Their departure marked the beginning of the end. We were all to leave so soon that incidental delays became nearly intolerable. The loss of these three men was remedied by Bodfish becoming clerk for the remainder of our period of service, Willard completing the duties of the Mess Sergeant, and Burt taking McGuire's place as driver of the staff car.

There is only a little more to write concerning our life in Germany. On March 18th a small party, made up principally of the fellows not on any of the Coblenz trips, took an excursion with the French on the Rhine as far as Boppard. It was a beautiful day and the men enjoyed every moment of the voyage. The last few days of our stay in Bretzenheim were marred by the attempt of the French Headquarters in Mainz to send us to Paris by train, cars and all, rather than by road as we wished. Fortunately they could not make up a train at the last moment and we were able to have our Mainz to Paris convoy after all. We left Bretzenheim early on Tuesday morning, the 26th, and said a permanent farewell to the Rhine, Germany, and our war activity, which had brought us so much of hardship, yet also of happiness, during nearly two years life in Europe.

The first day's trip took us to St. Avold. It was over country with which we were somewhat familiar and we found little interest to obviate the discomfort which a very rainy day offered. St. Avold appeared much as we had left it four months before.




The 27th brought another early start. The day was again rainy and if we had not been on our way through an historic region our disgust would have been complete. We made a short stop just inside the wall at Metz, then passed through the famous battlefields of 1870 to the marks of the late war. The shelling on the district about Verdun had levelled all signs of habitation. Villages were but rock quarries and forests, blackened, broken stumps. We ate our lunch in Verdun, thus permitting several of the section, who had worked posts nearby in the volunteonne, where the fighting, though intense, had They returned, amazed at the complete upheaval about Fort Douamont, so much more

CONVOYTRIPS

CLEFMONT-MAINZ MAINZ-FERRIERES.

0 10 20 30 40 Kilometers.

Explanations:

-  : Towns & Villages, with Road.
-  : Rivers.
-  : Route followed by SSU: 647.



complete than any we had known in the Arger service, to visit their former surroundings. not meant the destruction which prolonged bombardment had wrought here. Of course we wandered about the town, battered and torn by years of shelling. It was but another reminder of the price paid by France in her martyrdom. Again we saluted her.

The night we spent at St. Menehould, a town not far from Verdun, and familiar to most of the section during the volunteer or Argonne days. The trip took us to the edge of the Argonne and the previous fall came back vividly as we passed almost within sight of Varennes. It was to be an easy jog to Reims and we were able to put in a good sleep in an old hospital in St. Menehould where we were quartered for the night.

A drizzle early on Friday slackened later in the morning and we had quite good weather. "Hap" Ahlers had the rear end of his car break soon after leaving. The resulting efforts to keep him and several men with flat tires in touch with the convoy confused us to such an extent that the cars were separated, the two sections waiting for each other on the outskirts of Reims, while Mark Kerr chose a route of his own, his absence causing us considerable anxiety since roads and towns were not the best of landmarks about the city. The main convoy had had to make several changes in direction while en route, on one occasion having considerable difficulty in turning about in the middle of the old No Man's Land, a barren waste, where the roads ran across yet unfilled trenches.

We were fortunate in reaching the nearly untouched section of the city first, as a sort of introduction to the worst mutilation which most of us had ever seen. For quarters we were assigned to a French barrack just outside the city and on heights commanding a good view of the country. Of course the Caserne, of which this barrack was a part, had been partially destroyed. There was little, scarcely anything, connected with Reims, which had not suffered.

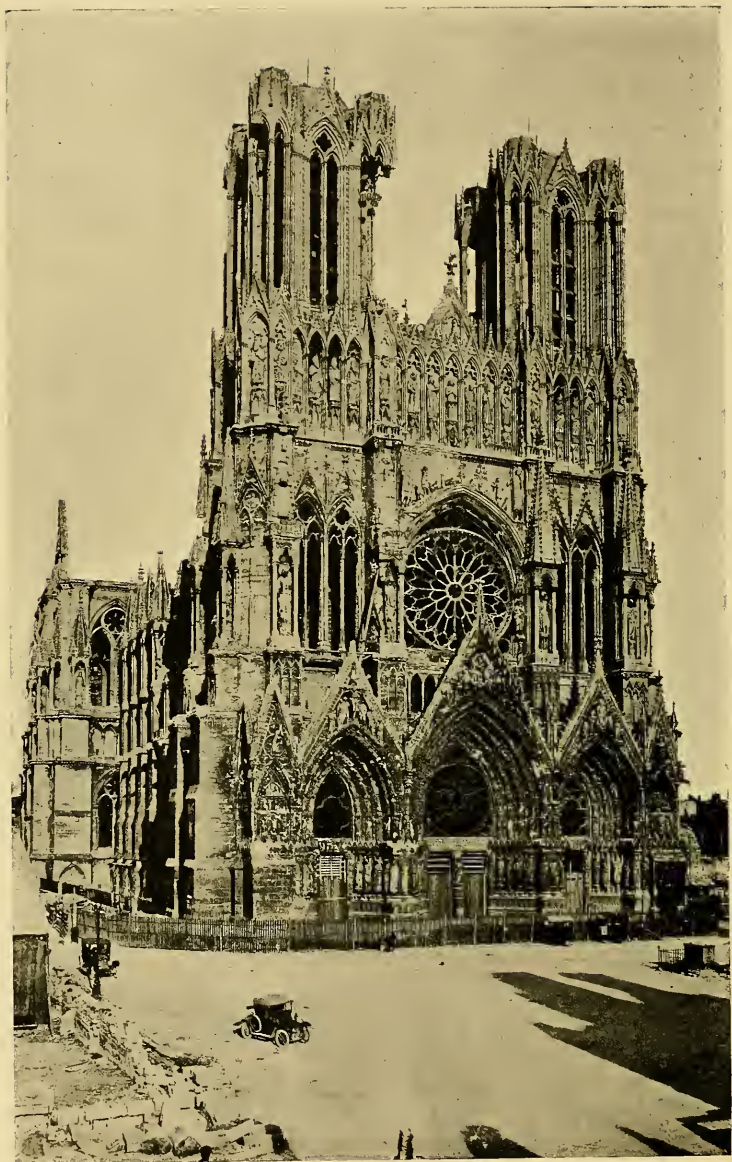
A rainy night even could not prevent many of the boys from exploring the city. Harris came very near serious harm when he stumbled over some barbed wire in the darkness and opened a deep cut on his hand. It required careful work by his companions and the help of a French medical assistant, next door, to set things right again. Don was pale for some time from loss of blood.

We lay over in Reims for a full day as a rest for the men and an opportunity to check up on the cars. Saturday afternoon and evening saw every man, unless already satiated with ruins, wandering about the city.

Reims was the worst specimen of war's destructiveness most of us had seen. This city of nearly one hundred and fifty thousand people, the center of a flourishing countryside, itself the home of factories and prosperous shops and stores, had been battered to a pulp. Street after street, home after home, was only a mere suggestion of what it had been. From the famous Cathedral, the first target of the German cannon, to the outskirts of the city, every building seemed to have been struck. Great mill chimneys were broken away, machinery was twisted and ruined, walls lay flat, or stood mutilated in a vain attempt to mark a house or a store. Some buildings escaped, with but chipped walls to recall the bombardment. These had been considerably utilized as homes and stores by the intrepid folk who were returning to rebuild the city. These sights stirred us even more than did that of the Cathedral, beautiful even under its wounds, as they told the gigantic task which confronted those determined to bring forth from all this debris a new Reims, as proud and majestic as of old.

During Sunday, March 30th, we made the trip from Reims to Meaux. It took us through Chateau Thierry, the scene of America's great effort in the German Drive of the previous year, and along the edge of the Marne battlefield. At Meaux we had our simple supper served in style in a restaurant as a change from the menu "a la mess kit". We found Section 644 and Section 649 close by, also on their way to Paris and Base Camp.

Monday noon we drew up at the curb just outside the Porte Pantin in Paris. The Lieutenant, who had gone ahead into the city for orders, reappeared quite promptly and we crowded up to hear the latest verdict. The first item was that we were to be rush-



The Reims Cathedral



Stopping in Verdun

ed into Base Camp the next day and hurried to Brest in order to sail by April 5th. Then came an official citation from the 82nd Division for our work with them in the Argonne. Lastly there was a French citation for the Lieutenant, accompanied by a Croix de Guerre. At these announcements our spirits rose as never before. We pulled around the edge of the city into a park for the night, as jubilant as could be.

The men were granted passes until eleven o'clock next morning. We shipped our baggage home through the American Express Company, paid a last farewell to old friends, visited the Opera and other institutions of memory. Before eleven o'clock the men were at the park, ready to set out. Everett H. Smith, Leo F. McGuire, Irving B. Snader, and Robert W. Bryerly, old section members, now private citizens of the world, were on hand to see us off. We rather suspect that the first three would have gladly forsworn Poland and gone on with us.

It was only a half afternoon's run to Ferrieres, the Base Camp of the Service. Mess time found us, minus our cars, full fledged soldiers again, started on the last lap towards demobilization.



Near Reims

CHAPTER VII

DEMOBILIZATION



OUR chronicle of the section must end officially with the arrival at Base Camp. Our work as we had known it was over and we became simply a demobilization unit, a part of the Army, the distinctions which we had enjoyed gone. The S. S. U. was dropped and we remained Section 647. Several of the men were transferred to the Casual Squad for discharge at St. Aignan, and Titchener left for an extended permission to visit relatives in England. Thirteen new men were assigned to us for discharge. Most of them were from Park A in Mainz and had been acquaintances before this time. We found them quite congenial and enjoyed the friendship with them.

The Base Camp of the Service had been moved from Sandricourt, where we had helped carry it on in the winter of 1917, to Ferrieres soon after we reached Neufchateau. It was used as a center for the construction of sections and the disposal of casualties. At this time its work consisted almost wholly of the preparation of the sections of the service for shipment to Base Ports, and then to the United States.

Plans seemed to point to our immediate departure. We were paid. Our cars were given up, and we assumed our share of the routine work of the camp, guard, kitchen police, or special duty. On Thursday, April 3rd, we passed through the inspecting and delousing routine, and were assigned a barrack in the Quarantine Area. Titchener, Putnam, Stender, Gaynor, McEnness, and Grover Taylor left us for parts unknown. The boys marched to and from the general mess in Army formation, assumed packs as part of life's burden, and tried to keep cheerful. One contingent of sections had left the Camp soon after we arrived. We expected to follow them to Brest. Our papers were made out according to the Brest regulations, and the eleven sections which were to make up our contingent were organized with Lieutenant Smith as the Commanding Officer. We were ready.

Just what occurred between this moment and our actual departure, to change our destination from Brest to Saint Nazaire has always been a mystery. It is said that



The Quarantine Camp at Ferrieres



Our billet in Le Douet

o'clock the next afternoon. It was a tiresome ride but one which we did not at all object to, as our spirits were then of the best. On arrival at Nantes we left the boxcars and hiked for some miles outside the city to a little town, Le Douet, Loire Inferriere, where we were ordered to wait until arrangements were completed for our transportation. The various sections were billeted in the lofts over stables or the attic rooms of houses about the town. Part of our section was assigned to the Town Hall which we shared with Section 534. Aided by straw ticks we made ourselves quite comfortable on the floor. 534 was of about the same type as our own section and we got along "famously" with them. All of the sections ate at a general mess close by these quarters. We were not particularly proud of our menu which varied little day after day. We excuse those in authority, however, as it was probably the best they could do for us.

It was not a difficult matter for us to become settled, or to seek out a variation from the prescribed routine. We had guard as before and sanitary detail, which fell



"Inspection"



*Three little chums at Le Douet
The Farewell
"Forward! March!"*

to us on the days, apparently, that some inspection or other was not called for. Each day the section was supposed to drill with packs in the morning and hike without packs in the afternoon. We could not revolt much against this program since it was the customary thing with all army units. Yet it seemed a pity for us to have to be initiated into the mysteries of army regulation after going through the war so free from other than very necessary detail. There were several clothing and equipment inspections by officers from the Area Headquarters at Nantes. On one occasion we were reviewed, along with a base hospital, by General Pershing. He complimented the Contingent Commandant upon the large number of decorations won by the men. It is said that he ordered the Area Commander to hurry us to Saint Nazaire as soon as possible. This order must have been misinterpreted somewhere as we did not leave right away. The General addressed us after the review and admonished us as to our behavior and comment to the people in America when we arrived. He told of the many good things which were to be said of the American Expeditionary Forces. It was a long march back to our billet and a longer wait before the General's reported order was fulfilled.

We had been so optimistic over our speedy shipment to Saint Nazaire that we had paid little attention to sources of amusement. The continued delay soon dissipated our courage and we turned aside to the first opportunity at hand for a change. A cafe next door furnished a lounging room for the afternoons when not at work, and for the long evenings. There was a billard table on which the boys brushed up the skill dormant since Mainz. The village folk were very pleasant and made a great deal of the men. We, in turn, carried on a thriving business at the cafe, not confining our trade to the articles popularly purchased but buying our meals there on the not infrequent days when our mess was scarcely palatable. In the evenings it was quite the usual thing for the boys to join the neighbors in games or other recreation. This neighborhood entertainment is a custom in the little towns of France which has appealed to all types of American soldiers when billeted among the people. It is a good promoter of understanding between them.

Within the Nantes Area there were troops of many organizations concentrated for overseas transportation. In and about the city there were, consequently, numerous places of amusement conducted by the Y. M. C. A., and Knights of Columbus. We got into the habit, easily, of attending the basket ball games and entertainments found there. Nearly every week some travelling A. E. F. company would put on its show for the benefit of the Nantes troops. These companies were ordinarily made up of clever performers and we thoroughly enjoyed the performances. There were, of course, always moving pictures to see. Even these were a relief after the listlessness at Le Douet.

The few days, ever lengthened, became weeks as we waited for the order which was to take us to Saint Nazaire. The papers of the contingent were remade. Back records, never used or lost, were hunted up, or invented, and everyone did his utmost to follow the instructions sent from the Headquarters in Nantes which always seemed to ask something unheard of from us. The officers of the contingent seemed completely at sea over the new requirements. We, naturally, were exasperated at the delay and saw very little good in anything that was done, or in anyone that did the doing. We about gave up the idea of ever leaving until the Area was absolutely cleared of troops. The order to move came as an unbelievable surprise on May 15th. We marched to the railroad station at Nantes and were again marshalled into box cars on the 16th. On reaching Saint Nazaire we were marched up to Camp Number 2 for the night. Early on the morning of the 17th we were inspected, our equipment was passed upon and we were again deloused. All this was done in such an expeditious manner that we marched to the dock and were on board ship before dark. No comparison is more staggering than that of the efficiency at Saint Nazaire with the methods employed at other centers where we have been. We were disgusted enough at the delays before we reached Saint Nazaire. Once there, we found only methods to praise.



Delousing at Camp Dix

*En route for St. Nazaire
Wet Weather.*

On shipboard

The troop ship to which we were assigned was the U. S. S. Mallory, an old coast-wise vessel refitted for use as a troop ship. The ship was none too large for oversea travel but it was kept quite clean, which fact more than made amends for the tossing which was given by the ocean. The ship left port early on the morning of May 18th. It was within sight of the French shore by six o'clock and we crowded the rails for a last farewell to France. Under other conditions we might have felt sad but we had waited too long for this moment to come for there to be any sadness to blight our joy at going home.

It was not long after the shore disappeared from sight that the boys began to stagger to the rail, and then reel down two steep flights of stairs to the hold where they flopped on to the bunks for the rest of the day, some, for the rest of the trip nearly. By the end of the first three days most of the men, although perhaps not as chipper as usual, were up and about, making the best of a hard lot.

The bunks were simply canvas covers on iron bars, making the task of keeping the hold clean and sanitary not a particularly difficult one. Mess was served, theoretically, in certain groups three times a day. Really most of the day was spent lining up for mess and mess kit washing. The mess lines doubled and redoubled about the ship. The food was quite good and, had it not been for the odor of the ship and kitchen, and the tossing of the boat, we might have enjoyed our meals. As it was, the only really enjoyable place was on deck. On pleasant days nearly every man could be found there. On stormy days the waves broke over the deck and kept us below. On very rare occasions we were allowed the promenade deck but, ordinarily, that was forbidden and we could only choose between being drenched to the skin on the forward or after decks, or being semi-sick below.

A small ship's library kept us supplied with some reading matter, and a Y. M. C. A. man presumed to watch out for us. Every evening, blood curdling moving pictures were shown on a flickering screen on the after deck. On the Saturday before we docked there were contests and boxing matches on deck to help pass the time away. Pie eaters plastered themselves copiously with mince meat, and coin hunters came out covered with flour and eggs.

The smallness of the ship and the heavy sea delayed us a little so that we did not reach New York until Wednesday afternoon. It was a beautiful day, in many senses, the most beautiful day we had yet known. After the inspection by the port officials we moved slowly up the bay, greeted everywhere by the welcoming whistle of boats of all description as well as by cheers from the shore. The Mayor's Committee of Welcome for the City of New York steamed out to meet us, bringing friends and relatives of many of the men on board. Their band played and our little band did its best in reply. The necessary slow process in docking accomplished, we pushed and crowded our way over the gang plank on to the dock where we lined up as sections for a rollcall, and then ran over to where the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., and Salvation Army were giving out coffee, sandwiches, and pie, as well as chocolate and other candy. Everywhere that we turned it seemed as if someone pushed some sort of fruit or candy into our hands.

The contingent, except for LaFleur, who had been taken sick on the last day and was sent to a hospital, went by ferry to the Pennsylvania Station in Jersey City. There we were again waited upon by kind ladies with fruit and coffee. A train, for which we waited impatiently, carried us to Camp Dix, New Jersey, where we marched into the demobilization camp and were assigned our barracks at about two o'clock Thursday morning, the 29th.

There is no particular need for a pause concerning the week's stay at the demobilization camp. We were deloused again, soon after our arrival, and were then marched to other quarters to wait until our turn came to be discharged. On Tuesday most of us were passed physically for discharge and were checked up on our papers. All of the men who were to be discharged at Camp Dix were out of the army by June 5th.



"Some of the boys"



Crowded Deck as ship enters New York Harbor



Entering New York Harbor

Those who had enlisted in the United States and had to be sent to other camps for discharge were free very soon after.

One of the features of our short life at Camp Dix was the visit of some of the friends and relatives of the boys. Also, one of the section members, Rosen, who had been detached from us before the armistice, by reason of illness, came for a final farewell.

It was fortunate that the section partially broke up in France and that the men were not all discharged at one stroke in Camp Dix. Otherwise it might have been less easy to say goodbye. As it was, it took every bit of the joy over being so near home to tide over the parting. We had lived to-gether, worked together, and played together for so long that we sincerely regretted that the pleasure of becoming civilians again had to be accompanied by a loss, at least temporarily, of so many real friends. We hope that this separation will not be permanent in any case. We hope that very many of the men will be able to accept the invitations extended by every man to visit him if in the neighborhood of his home. We hope, also, that all of the men may meet again in a body to renew the splendid acquaintances of the years in France. Yet, whether we ever meet again or not, the memory of the past two years will always be kept bright, and the name of 647 will be a reminder of good comrades and faithful friends.





TO THE MEMBERS OF S. S. U. 647:—

It has been with a sense of direct loss that I have watched our section gradually disintegrate and the men return to civil life. It is pleasant for you to resume the various activities which appeal especially to your interest, but it is a pity that we have to separate when we become civilians.

I like to think of the last few weeks of disappointment as a dream and remember only our days of real enjoyment, those days when we labored at the front, those later days when we found so much of companionship in Germany.

Our separation ought not to be permanent. The sentiments of reunion we expressed in Germany must not be permitted to die. I have not forgotten the invitation which I contemplated on the other side and I hope to see you at my home sometime in the future.

No man more deeply appreciates the honor of being a part of our section than I. I want every man to know that I am deeply grateful for the unselfish assistance each of you gave me. I trust that the coming years may reward you with the greatest happiness and prosperity.

Sincerely,

Leroy M. Smith

APPENDIX

CITATIONS OF SECTION MEMBERS

CROIX de GUERRE

Le Sergent Jack B. Kendrick, SSU 647, rattache a la 102 Cie d'Ambulances :—

"A fait preuve d'une grande bravoure en dirigeant l'evacuation des Blesses sous un violent bombardement d'obus de gros calibre et toxiques. S'est volontairement propose comme guide et a du etre evacue, ayant ete lui-meme intoxique."

G. Q. G., le 29 Mai, 1918.

Le General PASSAGA, Cdt. le 32 C. A.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

PRIVATE 1 CL. LEO F. McGUIRE.

"Was on duty as driver of ambulance at the advanced post in the 26th Divisional Area on April 19, 1918. During April 19th and 20th he made several trips to and from a dressing station reached by an exposed road, in daylight, for the purpose of bringing back wounded. On one of these trips the ambulance was blown from the road by the explosion of a shell and he was knocked unconscious by the shock. An recovering consciousness he returned on foot. Although suffering from an injury to the back and not yet recovered from the shock, he wished to return to duty the afternoon of the same day; but was not permitted to do so by the medical officer until the afternoon of the following day."

PRIVATE 1 CL. JACK R. SWAIN.

"Near Beaumont, France, on June 19th, 1918, he went to the rescue of wounded men, who were exposed to shell fire as the result of an accident to their ambulance, and being only able to approach within three hundred yards of the wrecked car, he took a stretcher and crawled along a ditch on the side of the road, thus succeeding in this mission. He then recovered the body of the third man who had been killed in the accident."

PRIVATE 1st CLASS TOD F. GILLETT (deceased), S. S. U. 647.

"On June 19, 1918, near Beaumont, France, he volunteered with his ambulance, under heavy bombardment, to bring wounded men to a place of safety. While returning from this perilous trip, he was killed by a shell."

PRIVATE 1st CLASS MARK E. KERR.

For extraordinary heroism in action near Fleville and St. Juvin, France, 11, 13 Oct. 18.

"After thirty-six hours of continuous driving over heavily shelled roads, Private Kerr upon his own initiative was the first to establish liaison with an advanced dressing station which had been isolated by the explosion of a tank trap. To do this he lifted his car across the mine crater with the aid of some infantrymen and for eight hours thereafter drove his ambulance through a heavy bombardment of high explosive and gas shells between the mine crater and the dressing station. During this period his car was pierced repeatedly by shell fragments, two of his patients receiving additional wounds. Two days later when the infantry made a further advance his car was again the first to establish liaison with an advanced dressing station on the outskirts of St. Juvin."

PRIVATE 1st CLASS HENRY L. SIGNOR

For extraordinary heroism in action near Sommerance, France, 11 October, 1918.

"Following the advance of the infantry, Private Signor caused his car to be

lifted across a mine crater by some infantrymen, and proceeding for three kilometres down a road heavily bombarded with gas and high explosive shells, he evacuated wounded from a culvert only four hundred yards from the enemy outposts. On the return trip his car was struck by splinters from an exploding shell, which pierced the clothing of his aide and caused fresh wounds to one of his patients. After transferring his wounded across the crater to another car he succeeded in driving it over a road almost destroyed by shell fire to a newly established dressing station in Sommerance. He continued to operate his car for twelve hours until he was relieved, having at all times displayed unhesitating courage and devotion to duty."

PRIVATE 1st CLASS CLIFFORD KIRKPATRICK.

For extraordinary heroism in action at Sommerance, France, 13—15 October, '18.

"While he was loading his ambulance at an advanced dressing station, Private Kirkpatrick was struck in the back by a shell fragment and rendered unconscious. Upon recovering he drove his car through heavy shell fire back to the field hospital and made repeated trips until relieved. Two days later Private Kirkpatrick, arriving at a point on the road near an advanced post saw a shell strike in the middle of an infantry detachment moving up to the line. He stopped his car and despite continuous and intense shelling loaded on three wounded soldiers, carried them back to the nearest aid station, returned and continued the work of evacuation until relieved."

PRIVATE JAMES H. RORTY.

"Private Rorty was relieved from duty as a mechanic in order that he might serve as aide on cars during the Argonne offensive. While engaged in evacuating wounded from a culvert not far from enemy outposts fragments of shell pierced his clothing, and, although suffering from shock, he repeatedly ran ahead in the dark to guide the car over a road partly destroyed by shells and still under enemy machine-gun fire. Returning with relief cars he again served as guide and as stretcher-bearer until the evacuation was completed.

This letter was sent by the Chief of Service to the following men:—Samuel A. Wilder, Allen H. Ahlers, Dirk J. Luykx, John B. Titchener, Eric A. Astlett, Robert W. Bodfish, Arthur W. Burt, Stuart H. Fraser, Charles M. Bashore.

November 4, 1918.

FROM: Acting Chief, U. S. A. Ambulance Service with the French Army.

TO:

SUBJECT: Commendation of personal bravery.

1. It has been brought to the attention of the Chief of Service that throughout the period of very hard and dangerous work which Section 647 was called upon to perform during the month of October, you performed your work of rescuing the wounded with such courage, devotion, and complete disregard of personal risk as to win the admiration of the officers under whom you served.

2. Such conduct not only does honor to your section but brings increased respect to the whole Ambulance Service of which you are a part.

A. PIATT ANDREW,
Lieut. Colonel, U. S. A. A. S.

CITATIONS RECEIVED AFTER DISBANDING OF SECTION

PRIVATE 1st CLASS ERIC A. ASTLETT, S. S. U. 647 with French Army.

For distinguished and exceptional gallantry at Norroy, France, on 15 Sept., 1918 in the operations of the American Expeditionary Forces, in testimony thereof and as an

expression of appreciation of his valor, I award him this citation.
Awarded on 27 March 1919.

JOHN J. PERSHING,
Commander-in-Chief.

COMMENDATION ON THE APPEARANCE OF THE SECTION.

France, Feb. 28, 1919.

1. The following extract from the report of Major Charles K. Berle, M. C., who recently inspected your section is quoted for your information:—

“The quarters of this section were very neatly kept, the men clean and having a military appearance in every sense. The cars were clean and all capable of rolling, short commutator parts. This was the best section inspected so far this trip.”

2. The Chief of Service directs that you be informed of the pleasure it has afforded him to read this report of the very excellent condition of your section.

By direction:—WILLIAM McFARLAND,
Major Ambulance Service, U. S. A.
Executive Officer.

CITATIONS OF THE SECTION

HEADQUARTERS 26th DIVISION
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

France, May 3, 1918.

General Order, No. 34

Early in the morning of April 20th 1918, the enemy launched a sudden and vigorous attack on that part of our front occupied by the 102nd Infantry. Under the protection of a smothering artillery firing shrapnel, gas, and high explosive shells specially trained storm troops supported by infantry greatly outnumbering our own made a bold and determined attempt to gain a permanent foothold in that part of our sector.

The engagement lasted well into the 21st, when the enemy after a particularly desperate struggle at close quarters was forced to retire without having attained his objective.

Under such circumstances it was but natural that we suffered some slight losses and I feel deeply for the wives and mothers who will never again see their brave husbands and sons who have died for the cause of liberty and freedom on the battlefields of France. They may well be proud of soldiers like these . . . To the great majority;—to those who were more fortunate and who came through the attack unscathed and who are ready and eager to show their spirit again, I desire to convey my congratulations on their success in turning back the enemy, and my admiration for their splendid courage and bravery. I wish to mention specially the valorous conduct of the following organizations which took part in this engagement:—(among others) DETACHMENT SECTION SANITAIRE UNIT NO. 647.

(Signed) C. R. EDWARDS,
Major General, Commanding.

The men named in this detachment by a letter from the commanding officer of the 102nd Ambulance Company which whom we were attached were:—

Sgt. 1st Class Philip Klein
Sgt. Jack B. Kendrick
Corporal Carey
Mech. Risley, Anderson.

Drivers:—McGuire, McEnness, Gaynor,
Ahlers, Swain, Dunlap, McCrackin, Signor,
Willard, Bodfish, Astlett, Wilder, Harris,
Kirkpatrick, Soles, Gillett, Boatman, Tit-
chener, Putnam.

HEADQUARTERS 82nd DIVISION
AMERICAN E. F., FRANCE.

13 January, 1919.

General Orders, No. 1

1. The Commanding General announces to the Command the splendid conduct of the following officers and soldiers in action against the enemy as described after their respective names:

EXTRACT.

SERVICE SANITAIRE UNITE No. 647

This entire outfit performed most efficient service under unusually trying conditions during the Meuse-Argonne offensive, October 6—31, 1918. The individual members of this unit in the execution of their duty of evacuating wounded from battalion aid stations to the dressing stations in the rear were continually under shell fire, however, displayed an utter lack of regard for their personal safety and a high state of devotion to duty, which characterizes the best traditions of the American soldier. * * *

2. The Commanding General takes particular pride in announcing to the Command these fine examples of courage and self sacrifice. Such deeds are evidence of that spirit of heroism which is innate in the highest type of the American soldier and responds unflinchingly to the call of duty, wherever or whenever it may come.

3. This order will be read to all organizations at the first formation after its receipt.

OFFICIAL

R. I. Boyd,
Major, A. G. D., Adjutant.

By Command of Major General DUNCAN:

GORDON JOHNSTON,
Chief of Staff.

CASUALTIES

KILLED.

Private First Class Tod Ford Gillett, June 19, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

WOUNDED.

Sergeant Jack B. Kendrick, burned by gas, April 20, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Mechanic Lou R. Risley, gassed, April 29, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Private First Class Devereux G. Dunlap, gassed, April 20, at Beaumont, France.

Private First Class Clarence A. Gaynor, gassed, April 20, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Private First Class Wallace McCrackin, gassed, April 20, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Private First Class John J. McEnness, gassed, April 20, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Private First Class Jack R. Swain, gassed, April 20, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Private First Class Grant R. Willard, gassed, April 20, 1918, at Beaumont, France.

Private Clifford O. Soles, gassed, August 8, 1918, at Flirey, France.

Private Mike A. Shusko, gassed, August 8, 1918, at Flirey, France.

Private First Class Stuart H. Fraser, hit by éclat, October 14, 1918, at Pleinchamp Farm, France.

ROSTER OF SECTION 647



LEROY M. SMITH, *First Lieutenant*, Ehrhardt, South Carolina. Enlisted April 21, 1917. Was in the U. S. A. A. S. at Allentown. Became the Commanding Officer of the Section on June 5, 1918. Awarded Croix de Guerre and American Distinguished Service Cross.

JACK R. SWAIN, *Sergeant First Class*, 2818 Maple Avenue, Dallas, Texas. Was in Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Became First Sergeant, February 19, 1919. Has been decorated with the American Distinguished Service Cross.

WALLACE MCCRACKIN, *Sergeant*, Hamilton, Montana. Was in Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Joined the section, November 8, 1917.

HENRY M. MARTINSON, *Cook*, Vanville, North Dakota. Enlisted September 18, 1917. Was with the 307th Sanitary Train. Officially assigned to the section, November 6, 1918. Had been with section since June, 1918. Left, to return to U. S. A. on honorable discharge, February 19, 1919.

ROGER J. WILLIAMS, *Cook*, Rusk, North Carolina. Enlisted February 22, 1918. Was in the Medical corps as a Casual. Joined the section July 6, 1918. Became a cook on February 19, 1919.



EDMUND G. E. ANDERSON, *Mechanic*, Woodstock, Connecticut. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917.

LEO R. RISLEY, *Mechanic*, 1200 Pierre Street, Manhattan, Kansas. Enlisted May 16, 1917. Was in the U. S. A. A. S. at Allentown. Joined the section February 4, 1918.

LEO F. MCGUIRE, *Mechanic*, Box 34, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Was with Section 11, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Has been decorated with the Croix de Guerre in the Volunteer Service, and the American Distinguished Service Cross. Left the section in March for work with the American Red Cross in Poland.

EVERETT H. SMITH, *Mechanic, Clerk*, 8 West Rock Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 8, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917. Left the section in March for work with the American Red Cross in Poland.

ALLEN H. AHLERS, *Private First Class*, 394 Second Avenue, Saint Cloud, Minnesota. Was with Section 61, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 26, 1917. Joined the Section November 8, 1917.



ERIC A. ASTLETT, *Private First Class*, 117 Pearl Street, New York City. Was with Section 61, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 26, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Received citation from General Pershing.



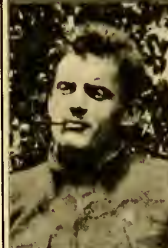
ROBERT W. BODFISH, *Private First Class*, Palmer, Massachusetts. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 8, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917. Clerk of section from March, 1919.



ARTHUR W. BURT, *Private First Class*, Windsor Locks, Connecticut. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917.



DEVEREUX G. DUNLAP, *Private First Class*, 3908 Gaston Avenue, Dallas, Texas. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Received citation from General Pershing.



STUART H. FRASER, *Private First Class*, 609 West 158th Street, New York City. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 26, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917.



CLARENCE A. GAYNOR, *Private First Class*, 151 West 88th Street, New York City. Was with Section 7, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 3, 1917. Joined the section on November 8, 1917.

R. DONNELL HARRIS, *Private First Class*, 569 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Was with Section 11, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Has received the Croix de Guerre in the Volunteer Service.

ALBERT LAFLEUR, *Private First Class*, 3 Hancock Street, Worcester, Massachusetts. Enlisted June 11, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. in Allentown. Joined the section February 4, 1918.

MARK E. KERR, *Private First Class*, Fellows, California. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 19, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917. Has received the American Distinguished Service Cross.

CLIFFORD KIRKPATRICK, *Private First Class*, 856 Main Street, North Leominster, Massachusetts. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917. Has received the American Distinguished Service Cross.



DIRK J. LUYKX, *Private First Class*, 362 Riverside Drive, New York City. Enlisted October 12, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917.



JOHN J. MCENNESS, *Private First Class*, Newport, Rhode Island. Was with Section 7, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 3, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917.



WILLIAM A. PUTNAM, *Private First Class*, 70 Willow Street, Brooklyn, New York. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section February 4, 1917.



HENRY L. SIGNOR, *Private First Class*, 15 LaGrange Street, Worcester, Massachusetts. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 8, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917. Has received the American Distinguished Service Cross.



IRVING B. SNADER, *Private First Class*, 417 Golden Hill Street, Bridgeport, Connecticut. Was with Section 11, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Has been Acting Mess Sergeant.



JARVIS STENDER, *Private First Class*, 1214 West 74th Street, Auburn Park, Chicago, Illinois. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Was with the American Red Cross, Section 24. Enlisted September 18. Has received the Croix de Guerre in the Volunteer Service. Re-enlisted with the American Red Cross after service with the Army.

JOHN H. TAYLOR, *Private First Class*, Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. Was with Section 61, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 26, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917.

JOHN B. TITCHENER, *Private First Class*, 223 Thurston Avenue, Ithaca, New York. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 8, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917.

SAMUEL A. WILDER, *Private First Class*, 28 Medford Street, Springfield, Massachusetts. Was with the American Ambulance, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Enlisted September 8, 1917. Joined the section November 19, 1917.

GRANT R. WILLARD, *Private First Class*, Mankato, Minnesota. Was with Section 61, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 26, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917.



CHARLES M. BASHORE, *Private*, Mifflintown, Pennsylvania. Enlisted May 29, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. at Allentown. Joined the section February 4, 1918.



JAMES H. RORTY, *Private*, C/o Philip H. Rorty, Goshen, New York. Enlisted June 9, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. at Allentown. Joined the section February 4, 1918. Has received the American Distinguished Service Cross.



JEREMIAH J. SAVAGE, *Private*, 1506 S. Ringgold Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Enlisted May 28, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. at Allentown. Joined the section February 4, 1918.



ESTON SNIPES, *Private*, Monroe, North Carolina, R. F. D. No. 1. Enlisted March 7, 1918. Had been a casual in the Medical Corps. Joined the section July 6, 1918.



CLIFFORD O. SOLES, *Private*, Woburn, Massachusetts. Was with the American Field Service. Enlisted October 17, 1917. Joined the section November 24, 1917.



GROVER TAYLOR, *Private*, Bridgeville, Delaware. Enlisted March 8, 1918. Had been a casual in the Medical Corps. Joined the section July 6, 1918.

LEE A. WALDOCK, *Private*, South Hayes Avenue, Sandusky, Ohio. Enlisted April 28, 1918. Had been a casual in the Medical Corps. Joined the section July 6, 1918.

THOMAS M. WOODELL, *Private*, New York Laundry, Jacksonville, Florida. Was with Section 60, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 20, 1917. Joined the section November 8, 1917. Has received the French Croix de Guerre in the Volunteer Service. Acted as section cook until April 2, 1919. Reduced at his own request.

TRANSFERRED AFTER THE SECTION LEFT
THE FRONT.



JACK B. KENDRICK, *Second Lieutenant*, Fairfax, Vermont, formerly Sergeant First Class. Was with Section 11, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 12, 1917. With the section from November 8, 1917, to November 5, 1918. Received Croix de Guerre while with the section. Became Commanding Officer of Section 649, U. S. A. A. S., later, a Red Cross Officer for Service in Poland.



ROBERT W. BYERLY, *Sergeant*, later reduced at his own request, 141 Broadway, New York City. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Was with the section from November 8, 1917, to November 25, 1918.



MAURICE S. ROSEN, *Private*, 1300 Randolph Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Enlisted May 15, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. in Allentown. Was with the section from February 4, 1918, to November, 1918.

GEORGE S. JACKSON, *First Lieutenant*, formerly Sergeant. Was with Section 11, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted September 12, 1917. Was with the section from September 30, 1918, to November 21, 1918. Received the Croix de Guerre in the Volunteer Service.

JOHN B. CAREY, *Corporal*, White Salmon, Washington. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Was with the section from November 8, 1917, to December, 1918.

RAYMOND O. MORTON, *Private*, Winslow, Indiana, R. F. D. 2. Enlisted March 29, 1918. Was a casual in Medical Corps. Was with the section from July 6, 1918, to November 25, 1918.

STANLEY J. PORCHASKA, *Private First Class*. Enlisted October 18, 1917. Was with the section from November 5, 1918, to November 25, 1918. Had been a U. S. A. A. S. casual.

MIKE A. SHUSKO, *Private*. Enlisted March 30, 1918
Was a casual in the Medical Corps. Was with the section
from July 6, 1918, to November 25, 1918.

SHELA WOMACK, *Private*. Enlisted February 9, 1918.
Was a casual in the Medical Corps. Was with the section
from July 6, 1918, to November 25, 1918.

FORMER MEMBERS OF THE SECTION.



TOD FORD GILLETT, *Private First Class*, Crescent Place,
Tampa, Florida. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Am-
bulance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Joined the sec-
tion November 8, 1917. Was killed while on duty with his
car at Beaumont, France, June 19, 1918. His parents are
the recipients of the American Distinguished Service Cross
awarded for his bravery.

HARRY E. ANDERSON, *Captain*, formerly First Lieuten-
ant, the first Commanding Officer of the Section. Was the
former chef of Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Ser-
vice. Was with the section from November 12, 1917, to
June 5, 1918.

PHILIP KLEIN, *First Lieutenant*, formerly Sergeant
First Class. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambul-
ance Service. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Was with the sec-
tion from November 8, 1917, to July 9, 1918.

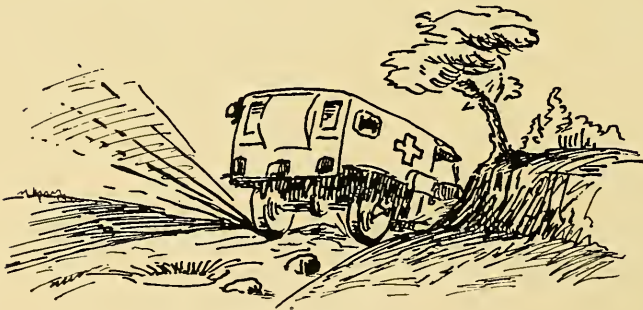
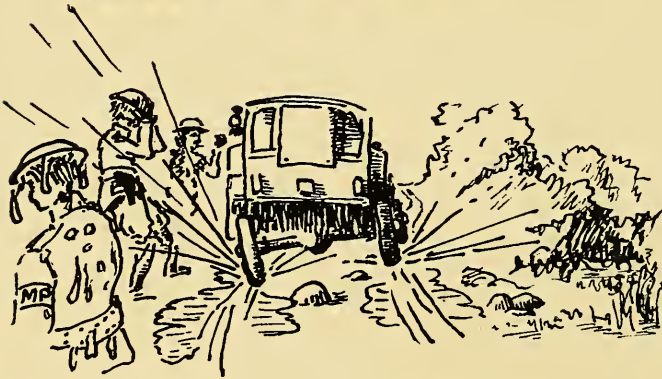
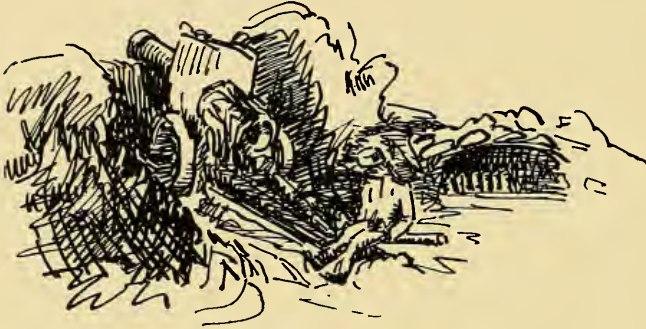
EDWARD W. KEEVER, *Second Lieutenant*, formerly Private First Class, Centreville, Ohio. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Was with the section from November 8, 1917, to March 10, 1918.

EDWARD BROWNING, *Private First Class*. Enlisted October 4, 1917. Was with Section 21, Norton-Harjes Ambulance Service. Was with the section from November 8, 1917, to November 30, 1917.

LAWRENCE BOATMAN, *Cook*. Enlisted May 15, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. in Allentown. Was with the section from November 19, 1918, to September 20, 1918.

EDWARD DURKIN, *Mechanic*. Enlisted May 25, 1917. Was with the section from November 8, 1917, to November 24, 1917.

ROBERT H. WOLF, *Private*. Enlisted October 11, 1917. Was with the U. S. A. A. S. in Allentown. Was with the section from November 19, 1917 to February 4, 1918.









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